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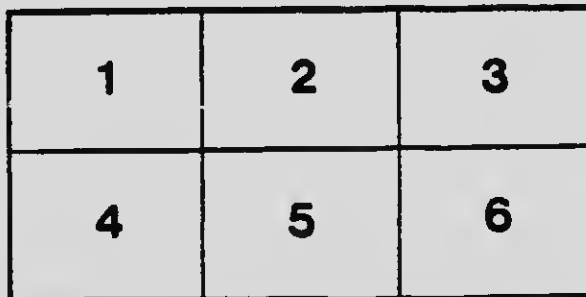
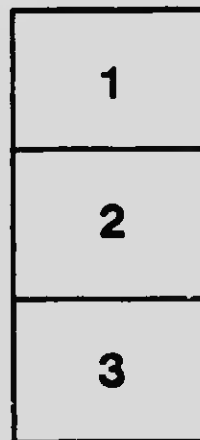
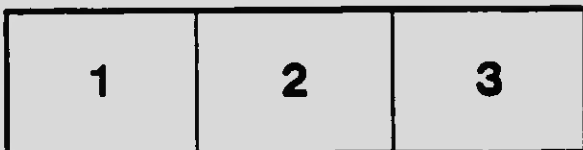
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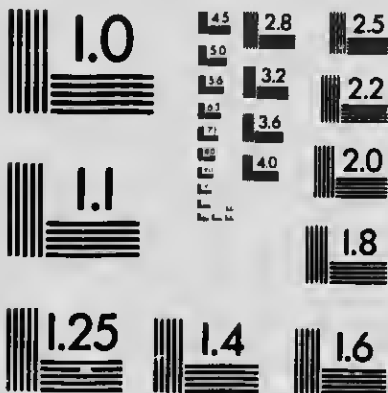
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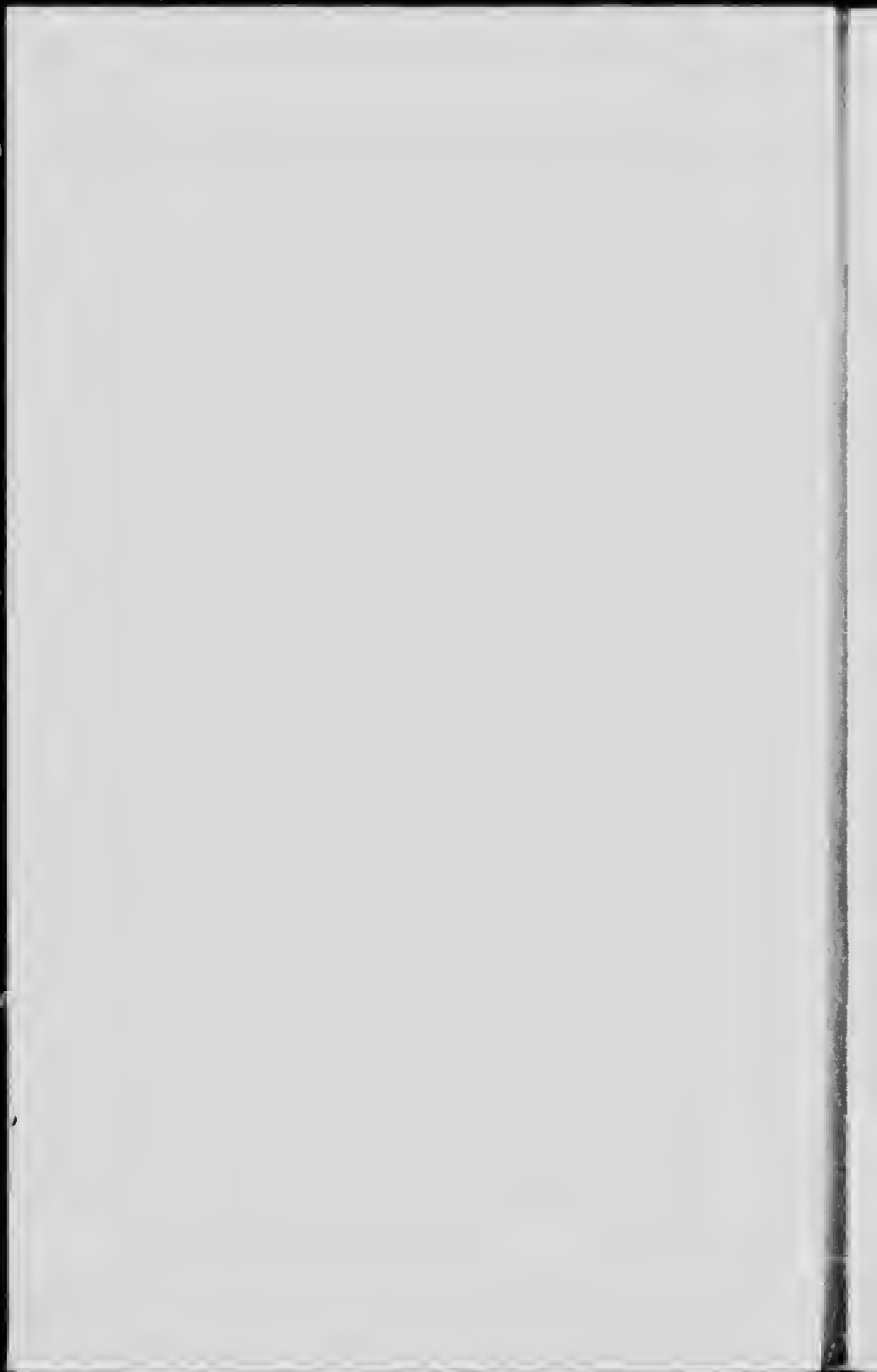


THE NEW YORK WORLD

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THIS FUNNY WORLD





# THIS FUNNY WORLD

BY

F. RAYMOND COULSON

AUTHOR OF "A JESTER'S JINGLES," ETC.



TORONTO  
THE COPP, CLARK CO., LIMITED

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## Dedication

THIS funny world! I wrote a book,  
And, quaking, to the market brought it.  
And lo! good people came and took  
Me by surprise. They bought it!

So once again my bells I shake,  
And wag my tongue in elation,  
And beg those generous souls to take  
This grateful Dedication.

And with the wares I here unfold,  
Inspired by friends who proved such true ones,  
I hope to keep those friends of old,  
And gain, perchance, some new ones.

In me a jester laughs and lives  
Who thought to weep and die neglected.  
This funny world! It often gives  
Us more than we expected.

# THIS FUNNY WORLD

## NOTHING

THE world goes spinning round through space,  
Each moment in a different place.  
And what supports it at its base ?

Nothing.

And we, reflecting with a sigh  
That we must toil to live—or die,  
Wish we could be supported by

Nothing.

We live and love, with fitful gleams  
Of joy. We cherish hopes and dreams.  
And what's the end of all our schemes ?

Nothing.

And when, all tribulations past,  
In oak or elm they've shut us fast,  
What do we signify at last ?

Nothing.



**This Funny World**

And this is all—for lord and friar,  
For rags and riches, serf and squire,  
The goal of every man's desire—

Nothing !

Still you can laugh and I can sing,  
So, while we may, let's have our fling,  
For what's the end of everything ?

Nothing !

Yet if but half the things we hope  
Should fall within our future scope,  
What are the ills with which we cope ?

Nothing.

## THE MARIONETTES

THIS is the Theatre. Come, let us look in.

The Marionettes are about to begin.

Here Comedy dovetails

With Tragedy's rage,

And lyrical love-tales

Are played on the stage—

Are played by the puppets—those whimsical things.

But nobody knows who is pulling the strings.

The curtain goes up on two opposite sets,

They're called the Political Marionettes.

One party discloses

Its cure for earth's wrongs ;

The other opposes,

So hammer and tongs

They fight. But the battle is worked from the " wings

And nobody sees who is pulling the strings.

Next scene : forge and factory, bustle and murk,

And ten million puppets. Performance called Work.

All patient and clever

They rise with the sun,

Yet somehow they never—

Oh, never seem done !

## This Funny World

It makes you feel sorry. Poor brave-hearted things !  
And nobody knows who is pulling the strings.

Look ! many and many a disciplined corps  
Of Marionettes—this performance is War.

Each other they slaughter,  
Though why you can't think,  
And out on the water  
Great war-vessels sink.

Who makes this sore trouble—poor puppets or kings ?  
Ah ! nobody knows who is pulling the strings.

Now this is a love scene. How happy they look,  
The man and the maid sitting there by the brook !

With ardent outpouring  
He courts his coquette ;  
And she is adoring  
Her Marionette.

And this keeps the world alive—so the bard sings—  
Though nobody knows who is pulling the strings.

So, loving and hating, and playing strange tricks,  
These Marionettes seem a mystical mix.

Their humour is splendid,  
They bravely bear knocks,  
And when the show's ended  
They're packed in a box.

And everything's worked from the "flies" and the  
"wings,"  
But nobody knows who is pulling the strings !

## THE MERRY-GO-ROUND

THE Merry-go-round ! The Merry-go-round !  
Look at the crowd on the Merry-go-round—  
    Urging their courses,  
    The bad and the good,  
    Riding their horses,  
    Their hobbies of wood—  
Riding their horses 'mid clamorous sound.  
Look at the crowd on the Merry-go-round !

Happy and hapless, the old and the young ,  
Youth with bright eyes and a garrulous tongue ;  
    Age seeing dimly,  
    And sparing its breath,  
    But holding on grimly—  
    As grimly as death.  
And whither, thus riding so fast, are they bound,  
The riders who ride on the Merry-go-round ?

High on their horses, December and June,  
And Time in the centre—Time, playing the tune.  
    Furtively grinning,  
    With mirth in his soul,  
    Watching them spinning  
    And knowing their goal !

## This Funny World

Onward! Ho, ho! how they cover the ground—  
Look at the crowd on the Merry-go-round!

Youth on Ambition—that favourite hack—  
Progress, the white horse, with Hope on his back:

Greed yellow-eyeballed—

A black horse for Greed—

Love on a piebald

And rickety steed.

On 'mid the flare of the naphtha they bound.

Look at the crowd on the Merry-go-round!

Whirling, Time's Merry-go-round never stops,  
And every rider rides on till he drops;

And as he sadly

Sinks down on the course,

Some one else madly

Leaps on to his horse!

Over the sawdust with clamorous sound—

Look at the crowd on the Merry-go-round!

## THE MERRY MONARCH

O HAIL to the sovereign King !  
The best of all kings on our planet,  
Although it's the popular thing  
To rant at his rule, and to ban it.  
Acclaim him whose magical power  
Can spread with the sweetest of honey  
The dry bread of life  
For man and his wife,  
For there's nothing like plenty of money.

Then loyally own  
The King on his throne !  
Begone, hypocritical gammon  
That calls him a curse :  
Sing hey the full purse !  
For the monarch of monarchs is Mammon.

Mirth laughs in his glittering court,  
With Plenty and Peace—lovely ladies.  
He makes of lean Worry his sport,  
And hurls haggard Hunger to Hades.

## This Funny World

He smooths the rough forehead of Care  
 With smiles that are golden and sunny,  
 There's freedom, fresh air,  
 And a carriage and pair,  
 If you've only got plenty of money.

A box at the play,  
 And a dinner each day,  
 Turtle soup if you want it—and salmon ;  
 New suits and new boots,  
 And a motor that toots,  
 If you're under the wing of King Mammon.

He bids the dread workhouse avaunt,  
 Make Poverty's tearful eyes tearless ;  
 He fills out the figure that's gaunt,  
 And cheers up the heart of the cheerless.  
 Since Want is the brother of Woe,  
 More relish you get for the funny  
 When there's wine in your cup,  
 And you're never hard up,  
 But provided with plenty of money.

Let humbug repeat  
 " Honest poverty's sweet,"  
 But we're not taken in by that gammon,  
 For most ills you endure  
 There's a " Sovereign " cure,  
 And a jolly good fellow is Mammon.

## ODE TO A MILLIONAIRE

We sing the soldier's and the sailor's praise,  
The statesman's worth inspires  
Wild harps, and lordly Labour nowadays  
Is hymned on many lyres.  
But no one's brave enough to sing to you—  
Perhaps you do not care—  
And yet, methinks, you ought to have your due,  
O Millionaire !

Unhappy butt of universal jeer ;  
My spirit is distressed  
To learn that you have neither love nor fear  
Nor pity in your breast.  
I hear you called a wolf, a shark, a rat,  
A fiend with gloating glare,  
Likewise a thief—are you as bad as that,  
O Millionaire ?

They say you can't digest the food you eat,  
But spurn each tempting dish,  
And munch unbuttered toast in lieu of meat,  
Soup, entrée, game and fish.



## This Funny World

They say you cannot laugh, and never joke,  
 And find, to your despair,  
 No flavour in the prime cigars you smoke,  
 O Millionaire !

Poor wretch ! if you are so unfortunate,  
 I really wonder why  
 Folks speak of you with such tremendous hate  
 Instead of pitying sigh.  
 If cash is such a curse, why don't they glow  
 With glee to see you there,  
 Afflicted with your load of golden woe,  
 O Millionaire ?

Can it be true that you're to Satan sold,  
 As Rumour's tongues report ?  
 Or are you, after all, if truth be told,  
 A very decent sort,  
 With good digestion, and a genial smile  
 For those who curse and swear  
 Because you've had the luck to make your pile,  
 O Millionaire ?

Accept a humble tributary verse  
 From me, who have no pelf.  
 I wish I had your genius and your purse :  
 How I'd enjoy myself !  
 To those who have none wealth is very wrong,  
 But if, by fortune rare,  
 They got it, they would sing a different song,  
 O Millionaire.!

## THE OPTIMIST

THE toiler had tears on his cheeks.  
His children were starving, he said,  
He hadn't had work for six weeks,  
And he heartily wished he were dead.  
The optimist prodded his chest,  
And guffawed and merrily twirled,  
And said, "It is all for the best  
In this jolly old world!"

The widow stood lonely and frail,  
And said, looking sadly around,  
"The vessel went down in a gale,  
And my son and my husband are drowned."  
The optimist listened with zest,  
And answered, with comforting mirth,  
"Ha! ha! It is all for the best  
On this merry old earth!"

"My wife has eloped," exclaimed Brown,  
"And taken my cash—I've been tricked!"  
Cried Jones, "Oh, my house is burnt down!"  
Cried Smith, "Oh, my pocket's been picked!"

## This Funny World

His ribs the gay optimist pressed,  
And into convulsions he curled,  
And roared, "It is all for the best  
In this excellent world!"

"Come, laugh!" he exclaimed, "and you'll find  
The wrinkles will fade from your face."  
Then up came a motor behind,  
And left him as flat as a plaice.  
And the folks whom his fun had depressed,  
Their hats in the air gaily hurled,  
And remarked, "It is all for the best  
In this jolly old world."

THE HUMANITARIAN

BE kind unto your fellow man—  
A true humanitarian.  
And learn (what you'd have never guessed)  
That Everything is for the Best.

Should influenza's microbe grim  
Prostrate you, lie and smile at him,  
For—happy thought to soothe your pain—  
Your loss will be the doctor's gain.

When fogs are thick and trains are late,  
Rejoice, and do not imprecate.  
For though the fog may bring you ill,  
It aids the plans of Burglar Bill.

When—crash ! Jemima drops the tray,  
And breaks your dinner-set, be gay ;  
There's comfort in that crash conveyed—  
It benefits the china trade.

Should early frost, severe in type,  
Attack and burst your water-pipe ;  
Seek solace, while the deluge pours,  
By chirping, " Here the plumber scores ! "

## This Funny World

When Winter grips our hemisphere,  
And coal becomes extremely dear ;  
Cry, as you pay the extra dole,  
“ It's good for those who deal in coal ! ”

And when, at length, you leave this earth,  
Why, some one else will get your berth.  
And thus, where'er you gaze, you'll see  
What's bad for A is good for B.

So you'll delightedly attest  
That Everything is for the Best,  
And hail creation's noble plan,  
A true humanitarian.

## THE IMPERIALIST

A CITIZEN went forth  
With pride upon his phiz,  
And gazed around him, south and north,  
On property of his.

A lordly look he bent  
On that majestic line  
Of buildings known as Parliament,  
And chuckled, " This is mine ! "

Upon St. Paul's he gazed  
In unaffected glee,  
And murmured, as his arm he raised,  
" All this belongs to me."

To his Town Hall he hied—  
A marble hall—with gilding,  
And, as he peeped with awe inside,  
Exclaimed, " This is my building ! "

He viewed, with bliss untold,  
And admiration fervent,  
The beadle, with his braid of gold,  
And cried, " That man's my servant ! "

## This Funny World

Art galleries he trod,  
And passed artistic strictures,  
And, with a comprehensive nod,  
Looked round and said, " My pictures ! "

He gazed, with soul that glowed,  
Upon the ocean wavy,  
Where mighty fleets of warships rode,  
And grandly said, " My Navy ! "

From many a roof and tower  
There waved, in stately manner,  
The Union Jack—great sign of power.  
He looked and said, " My banner ! "

He scrutinised the map,  
With boundless territory,  
And waved his hat (which had no nap)  
To signify his glory.

Then, almost stricken dumb  
By these delights ecstatic,  
He journeyed through a disinal slum  
And sought his home—an attic.

## OUR RULER

Lo, here is the leader of men  
Who wields the imperial sway,  
The Lion, the lord of the den,  
Who reigns, but has little to say.  
Provider of army and fleet,  
The captain and chief of the clan,  
He sits in his sovereign seat—  
The Average Man.

Lo, here's the real maker of laws,  
Who orders your woe and your weal,  
Tribunal in every cause,  
The judge, and the court of appeal.  
You live out your life's little fling  
According to his little plan.  
Bow down to your Master and King—  
The Average Man !

You walk by his standard, on roads  
O'er which he has willed you to pass.  
Your morals are set to his codes—  
And see that you keep off the grass !



## This Funny World

He brooks no departure from rules,  
 And, whether you bless him or ban,  
 He lords it o'er sages and fools—  
                                   The Average Man.

Proud holders of power and of place,  
 They are but his pipers and thralls,  
 Who bask in the smiles of his grace,  
 And pipe him the tune that he calls.  
 He raised them to pomp and to power,  
 And, ending it as he began,  
 Can sweep them from sight in an hour—  
                                   The Average Man.

If "War!" be the word of his wrath,  
 The fiat inflexible runs.  
 And lo! the battalions march forth,  
 And lo! there is thunder of guns.  
 If Peace be his will, it is so,  
 His finger and thumb are the span  
 And measure of Fate here below—  
                                   The Average Man.

He fixes the cut of your coat ;  
 Your welfare is based on his whim ;  
 And whether you sink or you float  
 Depends on your service to him.  
 He governs your sword and your pen ;  
 However you plot and you plan,  
 He still is the monarch of men—  
                                   The Average Man.

## THE HANDY MAN

THE Haudy Man's a quiet chap,  
A quiet chap is he,  
Who's always sailing round the map,  
And seldom home to tea.  
He's out of sight and out of mind,  
But, by some mystic plan,  
If there is trouble in the wind  
Up comes the Handy Man.

The Handy Man, he seldom votes,  
Or spouts to listening throngs,  
Or writes the daily papers notes  
To ventilate his wrongs.  
But if a cry for help is heard  
'Twixt Dover and Japan,  
Before the world knows what's occurred,  
Up comes the Handy Man.

The Handy Man, he chews his quid,  
And cocks his eye for squalls,  
And though you don't know where he's hid,  
It's "Here!" when danger calls.

## This Funny World

When death swoops down, and lands serene  
Are rent by earthquake's ban,  
The first arrival on the scene  
Is Jack, the Handy Man.

Beneath the heaving earth to grope,  
To scale a blazing stair,  
To help a woman down a rope,  
To quell a man's despair,  
To grip the robber by the neck,  
To slay the looting clan,  
To rescue babes from out the wreck,  
He's there—the Handy Man.

Policeman, fireman, doctor, nurse,  
And fighter stern and grim,  
A shout across the universe  
Will bring "Aye! Aye!" from him.  
Where flood and fire and ruin gloat,  
The skyline you may scan,  
And 'o! approaching in his boat,  
You'll spy the Handy Man.

They say our nerves and thews relax,  
And we're a race grown tame;  
But England still produces Jacks  
To win the world's acclaim.  
And England still can smile with glee,  
And flout the croaking clan,  
While she has sons to send to sea  
Like Jack, the Handy Man.

## THE HECKLER

He enters the hall with majestic air,  
And a threatening sheaf of notes,  
And he takes his seat with a pompous glare,  
As though he'd a hundred votes.  
His pencil he sharpens, his face aglow,  
Then he waits in a feverish state  
To let 'em all know what he knows, you know,  
When he heckles the candidate.

When he heckles the candidate, my boys,  
You would think that the Empire's fate  
On his questions hung,  
As with lusty lung  
He heckles the candidate.

He sniffs at the speech when the meeting cheers ;  
Oh, his visage is stern and grim.  
Such twaddle may tickle the groundling's ears,  
But it never will do for him.  
So cynical comment—like " Rats ! " or " Rot ! "  
He will often interpolate,  
And " What about himports ? " he roars, red-hot,  
When he heckles the candidate.

When he heckles the candidate, my boys,  
At history, oh, he's great !  
It's " What did we do  
In 'Seventy-two ? "  
When he heckles the candidate.

## This Funny World

It's " What about 'bacea ? " and " Who taxed tea ? "

" Will you make the dog-tax void ? "

It's " Will you support mixed bathing free  
For the suffering unemployed ? "

And—now for a floorer!—in wrath arrayed,  
As his fist comes down with weight,

It's " What 'ave you done for the oil-cloth trade ? "

When he heckles the candidate.

Thus he heckles the candidate, my boys,

With the air of a statesman great ;

With importance large,

And the world in charge,

He heckles the candidate.

Oh yes, he can teach 'em a thing or two !

Oh, he can give it 'em he c' !

He knows what's what, and he knows who's who,

He's a regular knowing card.

He's a devilish knowing eard, you'll notc,

He's an orator up to date.

Though you'll find as a rule THAT HE HASN'T A VOTE,

When he's heckled the candidate !

But he heckles the candidate, my boys,

With a frown as fierce as Fate ;

And it adds to the mirth

Of this funny old earth

When he heckles the candidate.

## UNEMPLOYED

HE was singing a hymn in the street  
As he mournfully shuffled along ;  
'Twas a hymn with so plaintive a beat  
That I wished he had chosen a song.

But that alms may be freely bestowed,  
While your eye grows with sympathy dim,  
'Tis the recognised rule of the road  
That a beggar must warble a hymn.

And his voice was extremely robust,  
As it pierced the ethereal void ;  
He was singing, he said, for a crust,  
Being one of the poor unemployed.

By the hymn I was somewhat annoyed,  
But I gave him my sympathy deep.  
He was one of the poor unemployed,  
With a wife and ten children to keep.

" How old are the children," I said,  
" Who share your unfortunate fate ? "  
A tear of affection he shed,  
And answered, " The eldest is eight."

## This Funny World

"Ten children—the eldest aged eight!  
How's that?" With the faintest of grins,  
Expressive of pride that was great,  
Quoth he, "There are two lots of twins.

"The wages I got was a pound—  
I never reached twenty-one bob—  
And now there's no work to be found,  
And here I am out of a job.

"There's thousands of others like me,  
And some who've got troubles more deep,  
Like Bill, my poor brother, sir—he  
Has seventeen children to keep."

I left him resuming his hymn;  
And the fact it is useless to shun,  
That the unemployed problem is grim,  
And that something will have to be done.

But a problem—a deeper one yet—  
Has received no solution so far:  
Why, the smaller the wages men get,  
The larger their families are.

## ROOM AT THE TOP

WHEN I was an urchin (in knickers)  
And revelled in cake with my tea,  
Kind pedagogues, parents, and vicars  
Bestowed much advice upon me.  
And one glowing precept they never  
Lost any occasion to drop,  
To stimulate youthful endeavour :  
“ There's plenty of room at the top ! ”

So, filled to the brim with ambition,  
I made up my mind to be—King ;  
But when I surveyed the position  
I found—a disquieting thing—  
*One* seat, which was held by *Another*,  
Who clearly intended to stop.  
Yet even *you* said, O my mother :  
“ There's plenty of room at the top ! ”

I next had designs on the Woolsack,  
But found with unspeakable pain  
An occupant *there*. 'Twas a full sack  
Constructed for one. Foiled again !



## This Funny World

An Archbishop's stipend allured me,  
 But—Hope's golden bubble went pop—  
 No room ! though our curate assured me  
 " There's plenty of room at the top ! "

Prime Minister ? Room for one only ;  
 Commander-in-Chief ? Ditto there ;  
 And—post of magnificence lonely—  
 No place for poor me as Lord Mayor.  
 So into an Office Boy's station  
 By fate I was thrown neck and crop,  
 While thundered each friend and relation :  
 " There's plenty of room at the top ! "

They told me, the junior assistant,  
 My fortune I'd speedily earn,  
 And be at a day not far distant  
 The head of that wealthy concern.  
 But rivals I found in profusion  
 Propped up by the very same prop,  
 And hugging that self-same delusion :  
 " There's plenty of room at the top ! "

The weathercock high on the steeple  
 Looks loftily down from his perch,  
 Surveying the world and its people—  
 The thousands who pass by the church.  
 Down there on the earth's roomy levels  
 A million of roosters may hop,  
 But up where the weathercock revels  
 The perch is for—oue at the top !

## BOILING THE POT

THE Common Mau, unknown to fame,  
Cuts no dramatic capers,  
In vain you seek to find his name  
Or portrait in the papers.  
Your ear with speech he troubles not,  
His sole concern is toiling  
To keep the pot—to keep the pot—  
To keep the pot a-boiling.

From day to day, from dawn to dark,  
Creating no sensation,  
The Common Man without remark  
Pursues his avocation.  
For weekly wage is only got  
By grim persistent moiling  
To keep the pot—to keep the pot—  
To keep the pot a-boiling.

He gains no place on history's page,  
Nor wins the hero's praises,  
He simply works from youth to age,  
Then sleeps beneath the daisies.

## This Funny World

He only knows (Life's tangled knot  
His comprehension foiling)  
One stern decree: to keep the pot—  
To keep the pot a-boiling.

Yet if the Common Man strode out  
Upon the higher ranges,  
Where preachers preach, and lawyers spout,  
And brokers throng exchanges,  
And traders brawl, he'd find the lot  
Their spirits often soiling  
To keep the pot—to keep the pot—  
To keep the pot a-boiling.

And they who make the loudest noise,  
And fill the foremost benches,  
Don't always win the greatest joys,  
Or wed the fairest wenches.  
But one and all with purpose hot  
They go, their souls embroiling,  
The Common Lot, to keep the pot—  
To keep the pot a-boiling.

And castle-builders in the air—  
The poets and the dreamers,  
Must come to earth with market ware  
And join the crowd of schemers.  
And castles fall ('tis Fortune's plot),  
And dreams must suffer spoiling,  
To keep the pot—to keep the pot—  
To keep the pot a-boiling.

### THIS NOISY PLANET

WHAT kills us ? What drives us insane ?

Not work, nor tobacco, nor gin—  
But noise (so professors explain),  
The murderous Demon of Din.  
By Noise tortured man is unmanned,  
Yet, mocking at him and his joys,  
He finds the whole universe planned  
And built on a basis of noise !

When Day through Night's barrier breaks,  
And sets all his ramparts aglow,  
The rooster (that early bird) wakes,  
And what's his first impulse ?—to crow !  
And, being constructed that way,  
His gift to the full he employs,  
While mortals blaspheme in dismay,  
Because he is making a noise.

But though you must suffer the sting,  
You can't say the fault is the cock's ;  
It seems an ironical thing,  
But life is a series of shocks :

## This Funny World

The dog has a deafening bark  
That wears down your avoirdupois,  
The milkman gets up with the lark,  
And both of them revel in noise.

The rain always comes with a splash,  
The wind with a moan or a shriek,  
The thunder arrives with a crash,  
The doors in our houses all creak.  
Babes howl from the moment of birth ;  
To yell is the nature of boys ;  
Yea, everything here upon earth  
Seems bent upon making a noise.

Our engines have whistles and snorts,  
And women have terrible tongues,  
And papers come out with reports,  
And ranters with clamorous lungs.  
And if you seek fortune and fame,  
One precept upon you is hurled,  
All counsellors tell you the same—  
You must make a noise in the world.

So, though I would rather be still,  
Since noise is so deadly a thing,  
And makes us so dreadfully ill,  
I join in the hubbub—and sing.  
Our state is peculiarly sad,  
For, though all our peace it destroys,  
And though it is driving us mad,  
We must go on making a noise !

## HUSTLE

You must hustle, hustle, hustle,  
If you want to get along,  
Or you'll tumble in the tussle,  
And be trampled by the throng.  
You must hustle, nerve and sinew,  
Brain and body, mind and muscle,  
With each ounce of force that's in you  
You must hustle, hustle, hustle !

You must hustle, hustle, hustle,  
As you take your morning dip,  
You must make the household bustle  
As you hustle and you skip.  
You must hustle through your business  
In a state of rush and rustle,  
In a hot and breathless dizziness  
You must hustle, hustle, hustle !

You must hustle all the knowledge  
You can get into your brain  
When at school and when at college ;  
You must hustle for your train.

## This Funny World

You must hustle reading, thinking,  
When you dine or "wet your whistle,"  
Sleeping, waking, eating, drinking,  
You must hustle, hustle, hustle!

You must hustle through your kisses  
When you love and court and wed,  
You must hustle through your blisses,  
And your mourning for your dead.  
You must hustle laughing, crying,  
From the moment of your birth,  
So you won't be long in dying,  
And you'll hustle off the earth.

## THE OLD MEN

THE old men, the old men,  
Dry leaves upon the stem,  
Come, icy blast, and cut them down !  
What use have we for them ?  
If they are rich our fingers itch,  
They burden us if poor,  
And the young men—the young men  
Are knocking at the door !

They've had their day, the old men,  
Why do they linger thus ?  
'Tis true that they were pioneers  
Who carved the way for us.  
They wrought for us and fought for us,  
And heavy burdens bore,  
But the young men—the young men  
Are knocking at the door !

They injure us, the old men,  
They do us grievous wrong,  
Their places are our heritage,  
Why do they stay so long—



## This Funny World

Why do they stay to eat our bread  
When they can win no more ?  
For the young men--the young men  
Are knocking at the door !

They vex our ears, the old men,  
Who in their foolish way,  
With ancient wisdom counsel us  
Whose light is of To-day.  
'Tis true they sowed that we might reap,  
Their strife was long and sore,  
But the young men--the young men  
Are waiting at the door !

They trouble us, the old men ;  
Amid our feasts there comes  
A sigh from wounded hearts of these  
To whom we grudge our crumbs.  
The tenderness they gave to us  
From us they now implore,  
But the young men--the young men  
Are waiting at the door.

Blow, storms, upon the old men,  
Fall, snow, on each grey head ;  
Why should our fathers trammel us ?  
The old are better dead.  
Wind, sweep away these withered leaves,  
For age must pay its score,  
And the young men--the young men  
Are thronging through the door !

## THE HONEST MAN

*(And the Man next door)*

THERE was a man—a man of peace—  
Exempt from Vice's ban,  
He was not known to the police,  
He was an Honest Man.

His wife and children well were fed  
When there was work about,  
And when he couldn't earn them bread  
They had to go without.

He'd pawned his coat, his wife her gowns,  
To fill their plates and cups.  
In short, they had their ups and downs,  
But far more downs than ups.

And oft, by want of work oppressed,  
Or gripped by sickness sore,  
That Honest Man with interest  
Observed the man next door.

The man next door, I grieve to say,  
Had often been in "clink,"  
He thrashed his "missis" every day,  
And drank a lot of drink.

**This Funny World**

At length he was awarded " three  
Months' hard " for stealing lead,  
And blithely told the Court that he  
Would do it on his head.

His wife quaffed gin—her only joy,  
While he atoned for crime ;  
She also thrashed her girl and boy  
To occupy her time.

So sympathetic persons came,  
On noble deeds intent,  
And gazed upon that drunken dame  
With tears of sentiment.

They led her off, with pity's touch,  
Unto a rural place,  
And cherished her, for she was such  
An " interesting case."

They sent the boy to boarding-school  
(With joy it made him whirl),  
And said, " We know a lady who'll  
Adopt the little girl."

And when the father's " time " had sped,  
They went with greetings warm,  
Found him an easy job, and said,  
" We'll help you to reform."

## The Honest Man

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The Honest Man, who had no job,  
Cried, " I'll forsake my plan,  
It doesn't pay, so help me bob,  
To be an Honest Man ! "

He smote his wife upon the head,  
Though why she could not think.  
" 'Tis for your good. Go out," he said,  
" Go out and take to drink ! "

Then, having thrashed his children dear,  
Which made them loudly yell,  
He took to crime. In that career  
He's doing very well.

## AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY

LAST rose of Summer this  
Bank Holiday of bliss,  
Pick of the bunch, let's miss  
    None of its splendour ;  
For when the next we greet  
Slush may adorn the street,  
And we shall sit with feet  
    Close to the fender.

No more such Mondays till  
We've had our Christmas fill,  
And there's outside a chill,  
    Winterly raw gust ;  
Till we have cooked our goose,  
And there is left for use  
Only bare bones !—the deuce !—  
    I prefer August.

Hail then, O smiling morn !  
Now, leaving work with scorn,  
Man, glad that he was born,  
    Finds the world sunny.

## August Bank Holiday

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Trippers to beaches fly,  
Motorists hustle by—  
People with money. (I  
Wish I had money!)

Nature with beaming face  
Welcomes the human race  
(Still, be prepared, in case  
She should turn spiteful).

Cyclists exclaim "Hooray!"  
Golfers a happy day  
Plan (though I've heard that they  
Swear something frightful).

Now for the cricket match,  
Now for the garden patch;  
Now by the stream, to catch  
Fish, man reposes.

Now for the sea—a yacht;  
Bowls on a grassy plot,  
Cool drinks, while sunshine hot  
Scorches our noses.

Some will, with one eye shut,  
Shy at the cocoanut  
("Three shies a penny!"), but  
Miss it. I had one  
Once; 'twas a boyish shot;  
But I, alas, was not  
Pleased with the nut I got.  
It was a bad one.

**This Funny World**

Lo, on the lofty swing,  
Maids to their lovers cling,  
Laughing like anything,  
    Joyous as fairies ;  
Small boys—a merry crew—  
Stand with their tongues in view,  
Stowing ice-cream into  
    Their " Little Marys."

Last rose of summer gay,  
Precious Bank Holiday !  
Happy crowds out to play,  
    Sport in their Sunday  
Best. Everybody seeks  
Pleasure with glowing cheeks,  
Striving to crush a week's  
    Mirth into one day.

## SUMMER REFLECTIONS

THERE's a cool and restful rustle in the trees,  
With the slanting shafts of sunlight shining through,  
    And, their gentle shadows throwing,  
    There the trees stand growing, growing,  
For the trees have nothing else on earth to do.

There's a gentle wind that quivers through the trees,  
And it kisses all the pretty flowers in view,  
    And it roams through garden closes,  
    Making love to all the roses,  
For the wind, you see, has nothing else to do.

There are birds that frisk and flutter on the bough,  
Singing songs, and never worried for a rhyme,  
    Pecking cherries for enjoyment,  
    To be glad is their employment,  
They have nothing else to occupy their time.

There's a cat that blinks and dozes in the sun,  
There's a cow whose occupation is to chew,  
    And the cat and cow together  
    Bask in splendid summer weather,  
For the cat and cow have nothing else to do.



There's a big retriever basking on the lawn,  
With a bone and an expression of content ;  
    Free from headache, care or canker,  
    He is richer than a banker,  
And he never has to toil to pay his rent.

When I sing " The sunlight shimmers on the sea,"  
You may say I've told you something that you knew ;  
    But you never had a glimmer  
    Of the reason for that shimmer—  
It's because the sun has nothing else to do !

And the tide is slowly ebbing down the shore,  
And you find the cosy winkle in his cot,  
    And the crab round corners creeping,  
    And (in beds) the oysters sleeping.  
And you murmur, " Well, they are a lazy lot."

Oh, the world is very sweet in summer time.  
Nature smiles, and in that smile of hers must lurk  
    The ironic contemplation—  
    Man, the ruler of creation,  
Is the only living thing that goes to work !

## EVERYBODY'S GRIEVANCE

WHEN I am dead the sun will shine  
With undiminished glitter,  
Nor show of sorrow any sign—  
It does seem rather bitter.  
I feel it—yet when I reflect,  
At this hard fate repining,  
Perhaps it's too much to expect  
The sun to leave off shining.

When I am dead the birds will sing ;  
No nightingale or linnet,  
No lively lark upon the wing  
Will cease for half a minute.  
Their songs, as in the sun they bask,  
Will through the woods go ringing.  
Yet—well, I hardly like to ask  
The birds to leave off singing.

When I am dead the flowers will bloom  
In spring (it seems like treason),  
And Nature duly will assume  
The aspect of the season.

**This Funny World**

Yet, though resentment fills my breast,  
I feel some trepidation  
In asking Nature to arrest  
The course of vegetation.

When I am dead, with jovial grin  
Mankind will still be merry,  
And folks will tuck their dinners in,  
And quaff their port and sherry.  
Yet, though I shan't be there to carve,  
Or join the goblet drainers,  
I hardly like to bid them starve  
And all become abstainers.

When I am dead, still through the land  
Will roll the wedding carriage.  
And men and maids will marry and  
Be given still in marriage.  
I shall be gone! And rice will rain  
In chapels and in minsters;  
Yet—can I ask them to remain  
All bachelors and spinsters?

When I am dead, this ball will roll  
As in old days and recent,  
And naught will change. Upon my soul  
It doesn't seem quite decent!  
And yet, though sadly I reflect,  
Such callous treatment scorning,  
Perhaps I hardly could expect  
The World to go in mourning.

## THE HOLIDAY MAKER

SWEET Mary, pack the trunk of tin,  
And let us leave the city's roar,  
The dust, the turmoil, and the din,  
And seek some sweet sequestered shore  
Where Nature's charm shall soothe our cares—  
Some restful spot beside the foam—  
But let it be a spot where there's  
An " Empire " and a " Hippodrome."

I sicken of these noises loud,  
The tumult, and the tramp of feet,  
Come, let us fly the hateful crowd,  
And find a haven fresh and sweet.  
Where we may gaze on Nature's face,  
And watch the wavelets kiss the sand—  
But, Mary, let it be a place  
Where there are pierrots and a band.

The sights and sounds of common day,  
The irksome town and its control,  
We'll leave them all and fly away,  
To seek refreshment for the soul.

**This Funny World**

A quiet spot, of course, dear wife,  
But with a pier or two (no more).  
Where we can see a little life  
And hire a donkey on the shore.

The sordid hucksters of the mart,  
Convention's artificial range,  
The world's devices chafe my heart,  
I hunger for a perfect change—  
A haunt of romance ocean-kissed,  
Where "rock" is sold in penny lumps,  
And where the glib phrenologist  
Harangues the crowd and feels your bumps.

Hark, Mary! Nature's voice I hear,  
She bids my spirit spread its wings,  
And soar in purer atmosphere  
Above the dross of common things.  
Old Ocean's voices call to me,  
Their magic tones sweet memories wake—  
"Hi! come and try our Shilling Tea,  
With jam and watercress and cake!"

Oh, let us leave the city stones  
For peace beside the ocean's brink,  
Where there are whelks and gramophones  
Fried-fish shops, and a skating rink;  
Where in a photograph your charms  
For sixpence shall my heart delight,  
Come, let us fly to Nature's arms;  
Oh, Mary, pack the trunk to-night!

## FREE ENJOYMENTS

OH, things are very bad,  
And cash is very short,  
There's little to be had  
For pleasure or for sport.  
So now's the time to see,  
With satisfaction deep,  
Forgotten things that we  
Can get upon the cheap.

To watch the sun arise,  
A wondrous panorama,  
Across the morning skies,  
Is better than a drama.  
You need not join the queue—  
This theatre wants some filling!—  
Look! there's a splendid view!  
And no one's charged a shilling.

If people had to pay  
To see that best of treats  
The sunrise every day,  
They'd rush to book their seats.

## This Funny World

To watch the sun go down  
On evenings that are sunny  
Is well worth half a crown  
Of anybody's money.

When Melba's singing, "Hark!"  
Folk pay and rush and jostle.  
But no one pays the lark,  
And no one pays the throstle.  
The blackbird, richly stored,  
Gives his performance near them,  
And we can all afford  
To sally forth and hear them.

Though poverty's not sweet,  
And merits bitter strictures,  
Free sights adorn the street—  
Shops, flowers, jewels, pictures.  
And pretty girls pass by,  
On view to all and any,  
Rich raptures for the eye  
That do not cost a penny!

Free speech, a precious gift,  
Abounds for high and humble;  
We're always free to lift  
Our voices up, and grumble.  
And when that priceless boon  
Has eased each fiery stormer,  
Up comes the lovely moon,  
Another free performer!

## THE BEST HOLIDAY RESORT

ON nights that are cloudy or starry,  
On days that are sunny or damp,  
Along promenades that are tarry  
Tired people persistently tramp.  
But, better than Blackpool or Brighton,  
With "Pleasure's" mechanical tread,  
The sweetest resort to alight on  
Is bed !

Resort that is never too crowded,  
Resort that from trippers is free,  
Where comfort is never o'erclouded  
By fears of what "ex's" there'll be.  
No trains, and no trouble to get there,  
No cabman's extortion to dread,  
No wondering "Will it be wet there?"  
In bed !

To places all built on one model—  
A pier and a tarry parade—  
Poor victims submissively toddle,  
In holiday garments arrayed.



**This Funny World**

The sea, and the sand, and the shingle,  
Whose novelty's vanished and dead,  
O shun them, and take a first single  
To bed !

Can Margate's monotonous billow,  
Can Felixstowe's feathery foam,  
Compare with the feathery pillow  
And soothing resources of home ?  
Here's health for the nerves out of fettle,  
Here's rest for the overworked head,  
Here's saving of gold (precious metal !)  
In bed !

While noodles are getting red noses  
By chilling themselves in the deep,  
Their cheeks might be getting red roses  
In beds, from the Garden of Sleep.  
While toiling in search of diversion,  
Go holiday makers half dead,  
Be wise, and enjoy an excursion  
To bed !

Though stations are pouring their throngs out,  
And landladies taking them in,  
And pierrots are pouring their songs out  
On sands where the tide's coming in ;  
Wherever your fancy may flow to,  
With dreary parades for your tread,  
The best of all places to go to  
Is bed !

## THE MAN WHO STAYED AT HOME

MR. BROWN, of Turnham Green,  
Viewed the hike with haleful glare,  
He was never, never seen  
Scorching off to anywhere.  
"Oft a fall upon the head  
Dislocates the vertebrae,  
So I'll ride no bike," he said,  
"Home's the safest place for me!"

Mr. Brown, of Turnham Green,  
Never motored out of town,  
Flashing through the sylvan scene,  
Cutting laggard chickens down ;  
Never went to hunt the deer,  
Never after grouse would roam.  
"No," he cried, "I'm safest here,  
So I'd rather stay at home."

Mr. Brown, of Turnham Green,  
Never in the summer took  
Tourist trips ; he'd never been  
"On the Continong" with Cook.

## This Funny World

"Fogs and rocks and tempests grim  
Menace ships that cross the foam,  
"And," he cried, "I cannot swim,  
So I'm better off at home!"

Mr. Brown, of Turnham Green,  
Didn't care for sport at all;  
Knew a fellow who had been  
Crippled by a cricket ball.  
Knew a man who, catching trout,  
Caught a cold, and—R.I.P.  
"Ah," said Brown, "beyond a doubt  
Home, sweet home's the place for me!"

So, from home at Turnham Green,  
Brown was never coaxed away;  
Never in a train was seen,  
Off to spend a happy day.  
"Here," quoth he, "with Peace (fair shape!)  
I will sip my quiet cup."  
But, alas! a gas escape  
One bright morning blew him up.

## ODE TO THE COW

O THOU soft-eyed, deliberate beast,  
That chewest in the fields at leisure,  
Whose life is one perpetual feast,  
An endless round of rest and pleasure ;  
Enjoying pastoral delights,  
Grief ploughs no furrow on thy brow ;  
No worry gives thee sleepless nights,  
O Cow !

Fair member of the gentle sex,  
That dost not have to study fashion,  
No petticoats thy comfort vex,  
No love affairs, nor Juliet passion ;  
No fringe that will not keep in curl ;  
Nor dost thou mourn a broken vow  
Beneath the moon, like many a girl,  
O Cow !

Backbiting scandal doth not blast  
Thy fame ; thou hast to hide no errors ;  
No memories rack thee with the past,  
For thee the future hath no terrors.

**This Funny World**

Thy lot by toil is unalloyed,  
Yet fortune spareth thee somehow—  
The sorrows of the unemployed,  
O Cow !

Thou placid chewer of the cud,  
No agitating social question  
With troublous fury fires thy blood ;  
Nor dost thou suffer indigestion.  
No dun assails thee in the street ;  
No landlord calls ; nor knowest thou  
The strain of making both ends meet,  
O Cow !

Glad quadruped ! behind thy fence  
No echo of the world's rough riot  
Can mar that splendid innocence  
And that immeasurable quiet.  
No blush need stain that skin of silk,  
Since, blameless beast, it is not thou  
That putteth water in the milk,  
O Cow !

## THE LOST MILKMAID

With a bosom sorrow-laden,  
And an agitated hrow,  
Long I sought the pretty maiden,  
She who used to milk the cow.  
I inquired in many a dairy,  
But whenever I appeared,  
Lo, instead of Meg or Mary,  
Found a milker with a heard.

Gone away ! and in the spring too,  
Merry milkmaids, sweet and quaint,  
Whom the poets used to sing to  
And the painters used to paint.  
So in town I sought the traitress,  
And I found she'd got a post  
In a tea-shop as a waitress,  
And I ordered tea and toast.

" Since you left " (her hand I patted)  
" British landscape's lost its charm."  
She replied, " Look here, you fathead,  
Have you worked upon a farm ? "

## This Funny World

"No," I answered, "I'm a poet;  
But 'tis pleasant work, no doubt."  
She retorted, "You would know it  
If a farmer hired you out!"

Oh, the milkmaid with her bonnet  
Makes the painter thrill with glee,  
Makes the poet write a sonnet,  
But—they don't propose, you see.  
And the farmer's fiercely vocal,  
And the maid's a toiling thrall,  
And she has to wed a yokel,  
Or she cannot wed at all.

So the milkmaid, shy and simple,  
Takes to typing—or to tea,  
Where, exhibiting her dimple,  
She may marry L.S.D.  
Or the milkmaid—Sue or Sally—  
If her figure's nice and neat,  
May, by dancing in the ballet,  
Bring a title to her feet.

Old romances we may foster,  
But the truth's before us now—  
We've irrevocably lost her,  
She who used to milk the cow.  
And, to save derisive strictures,  
Artists, hear the warning shout:  
You may put the cow in pictures,  
But must leave the maiden out!

## ODE TO THE PIG

O Pig ! O happy Pig !  
Gaze on our two-legged species—  
Poor mortals, small and big,  
Who do not know what peace is.  
You, smiling, hail the morn  
Whose fog's by us resented,  
Ah, Pig, you were not born  
As we were—discontented !

Observe us from the sty,  
Where joyously you tumble,  
You'll hear from low and high  
One universal grumble.  
We grumble, sire and son,  
At fate and at the weather,  
We grumble one by one,  
And grumble altogether.

O Pig ! how you must grin !  
In discontent man glories :  
We put the Liberals in,  
Then wish we had the Tories.



## This Funny World

We marry wives, and then,  
By tribulations harried,  
We envy single men—  
Who wish that they were married.

Whatever be our lot  
Our spirits it distresses,  
We wish that we had got  
What some one else possesses.  
But you, O happy Pig,  
Are free from woes and quarrels,  
And do not care a fig  
For manners or for morals.

O Porker sleek and gay,  
A lesson we might borrow  
From you, content to-day,  
Untroubled for to-morrow.  
While you, within your sty,  
Our foolishnesses seeing,  
Grunt, "Aren't I glad that I  
Am not a human being!"

## A SONG OF HARVEST TIME

THE farmer's grim machine appears,  
The trembling wheat pricks up its ears,  
    And whispers " Now for trouble !  
Woe's me, for in a little while  
This happy field wherein I smile  
    Will be a field of stubble.  
And being cut occasions pain—  
It always goes against the grain ! "

The bending barley heaves a sigh,  
The poor potato pipes its eye,  
    The apple's cheek shows redness.  
The pear remarks unto the plum,  
" The harvest time, alas, has come,  
    Let us prepare for deadness."  
The husky nut, with anguish racked,  
Exclaims " And I shall perish—cracked."

And while the farmer fills his cart,  
And we are eating damson tart,  
    Or munching pears and apples ;  
While Nature's lavish beauty calls  
For joyous harvest festivals  
    In churches and in chapels,

## This Funny World

In these delicious fruits I see  
A fruitful hint for you and me.

We live in times of push and pace,  
When life is like a motor race,  
    All danger, dust, and worry ;  
We rush and strain and spoil our nerve,  
Yet Mother Nature, you'll observe,  
    Is never in a hurry.  
She does her work and brings her spoil  
By steady, silent, tranquil toil.

“ GET ON ! GET ON--or else GET OUT ! ”  
Our blatant, hustling mentors shout,  
    “ No time to pause or parley.”  
They want to sow and reap to-day,  
But that, you see, is not the way  
    That Nature grows the barley.  
She takes her time—no fuss, no fret—  
And look what grand results we get !

So, as we eat our apple pie,  
And sing “ The Bloom is on the Rye,”  
    And hear the barley rustling,  
We might from Nature take our cue,  
That nothing good or great or true  
    Is ever done by hustling.  
And yet, I fear, in vain I've sung,  
I might as well have held my tongue.

## THE SABBATH-BREAKERS

ONE Sabbath morn I left the town,  
And wandered over hill and down,  
    In sweeter air for one day.  
But lo ! a lark sang overhead.  
"How dare you sing," I sternly said,  
    "Your weekday soag on Sunday !"  
That wicked lark made no reply,  
But went on singing in the sky.

I left the shameless hird with groans,  
And met a stream o'er mossy stones  
    A hurried journey taking.  
"What ? Travelling on a Sunday ? Oh !"  
I held my hands up. "Don't you know  
    That you are Sabbath-breaking ?"  
That stream vouchsafed no word to me,  
But travelled on towards the sea.

I watched a hee for half an hour  
Imbibing from a gilliflower ;  
    And "Can't you wait till Monday ?"  
I cried. "You might exist, I think,  
Without demanding Sabbath drink  
    And desecrating Sunday."

## This Funny World

He buzzed—I could have sworn he laughed,  
And took another hearty draught.

A wind among the blossoms blw,  
Its fertilising work to do,  
    And, though I could not view it,  
I stopped, and thus the wind addressed:  
“ Unmindful of the Day of Rest  
    You work. Why do you do it ? ”  
The wind swooped swiftly like a witch,  
And blw my hat into a ditch !

I stood and watched, with furrowed brow,  
A whistling man who milked a cow  
    (It made the day a bleak day !).  
The lambs were sporting, gay and brisk,  
And I inquired, “ How dare you frisk  
    As though it were a weekday ? ”  
I waited, but no answer came,  
They went on frisking just the same !

At smiling Nature then I glared,  
Demanding how on earth she dared  
    Permit this sad disorder.  
But as I turned and left the place,  
I fancied that on Nature's face  
    The smile was growing broader.  
For Nature—'tis her heathen way—  
Does not observe the Sabbath Day !

## ODE TO THE BRITISH CLIMATE

O THOU ! mighty Terror and Wonder,  
O Climate ! O marvellous Mix,  
O breather of sleet, shod in thunder,  
Beast of curses and kicks ;  
O thou that dost scourge us and smite us,  
And glower in thy blackness and bale,  
And stab us with croup and bronchitis,  
And give us the dance of St. Vitus,  
O Climate, all hail !

All hail to the blast of thy blizzard,  
Thy glacial daggers and dirks  
That strike at the lung and the gizzard ;  
All hail to thy mists and thy murks !  
For thus are we fashioned and fitted,  
By scourging and stripes from our birth,  
To go from the plough or the pithead—  
To fare forth from Ply nouth or Spithead  
And conquer the earth !

Behold—in the North with its rigours,  
In regions of snow and of ice ;  
Behold—in the East where the niggers  
Run stark amid balsam and spice ;  
Adapted for all sorts of weather,  
The Briton hath conquered and clomb.  
With heart that is light as a feather,  
And hide that is tougher than leather,  
Abroad he's at home.

## This Funny World

Serenity sits on his forehead.

Skies sunny, or skies without sun,  
Air temperate, frigid, or torrid,

All weathers to him are as one.  
While others lie stricken and smitten  
With sunstroke and frost-bite, not he !  
Calm, smiling, erect stands the Briton  
(With pipe, or with sandwich just bitten)

Thanks, Climate, to thee !

All hail to thy tempests and torrents,

Thy downpours that daily arrive !  
Thou slayest the weak with abhorrence,  
And only the fittest survive.

Hail thou that hast racked us and flayed us  
With East winds and nasal catarrh,  
And prone with pneumonia laid us,  
And thus fit for Empire hast made us—

The race that we are !

No traitor should pass then unprisoned

Who greets thee with gibe or with skit,  
Let patriot knife slit his weasand—

Yea, let his vile weasand be slit !  
What warrior, monarch, or primate  
Or conqueror rivals with thee  
(That villains and rogues hurl their slime at)  
That made us, O rare British climate,

The Kings of the Sea !

### SOMEWHERE ELSE

WHEN the weather's very bad,  
You will find, to make you mad,  
Splendid sunshine they have had  
Somewhere else.

You discover every day,  
Fortune's irritating way ;  
There are people glad and gay  
Somewhere else.

While it seems your fate to miss  
All the blessings and the bliss,  
Some one's getting Fortune's kiss  
Somewhere else.

And, your heart it sorely wrings,  
While you sigh at Sorrow's stings,  
Folks are happier than kings  
Somewhere else ;



## This Funny World

Sweeter honey in their hives,  
Brighter flowers, nicer wives—  
Altogether better lives—  
Somewhere else.

But you'll find them looking blue,  
If you take a closer view,  
And you'll find they envy you  
Somewhere else.

## OUR PROPERTY

MR. LANDLORD owns the acres  
And the buildings and the bricks,  
But the breezes and the sunshine and the flowers,  
And the moon (that Sabbath-breaker's  
Gaol for chopping Sunday sticks)  
Are ours.

There are owners (greedy grippers)  
Of the mountain and the cliff,  
And the beach belongs to some one and his heirs.  
But the salt inhaled by trippers  
And the oxygen they sniff  
Are theirs.

Landed gentry pass their time at  
Fencing meadows, moors, and bogs,  
In the streams they hold proprietary powers.  
But the baleful British climate  
And its blizzards and its fogs  
Are ours.

All the earth beneath the nation,  
Whence the syndicate secures  
Cheerful coal, producing profits truly fine,  
Is a private speculation ;  
But the National Debt is yours  
And mine.

## This Funny World

There's an owner for the pheasant  
In the covert fast asleep,  
But the keeper with his cartridge grimly towers,  
So—the flavour would be pleasant—  
But the sparrow chirping " Cheap "  
Is ours.

There's an owner at the portal  
Of the graveyard. Pay your toll !  
But as long as you are breathing 'neath the blue,  
There's your 'breath to make you chortle,  
THAT belongs, you lucky soul,  
To you.

Everything's appropriated,  
But, for people nursing wrongs,  
There's a happy thought their miseries to stem :  
They can muse with joy elated  
On the Empire that belongs  
To them.

Though we find the world a jumble,  
And our woes we can't digest,  
And we think that things are most ridiculous,  
There's our precious right to grumble—  
THAT'S a property possessed  
By us.

## ODE TO THE MOTOR BUS

RELENTLESS chariot of Fate,  
Wild motor bus—or "mobus"—  
Thou that dost so infuriate  
The driver of the slow bus ;  
Thy palpitation in the road  
Give others palpitation,  
Shall I then greet thee with an ode,  
Or with an imprecation ?

I do not like thy fume and snort,  
That drive pedestrians silly,  
Along the road of Tottenham Court,  
Pall Mall, and Piccadilly.  
Yet though thy bulk and breathings hot  
Make thee an object hateful,  
Thou whiskest me from spot to spot  
With speed that's very grateful.

'Tis pleasant on thy roof to ride,  
To sit with smile seraphic,  
And watch thee elbowing aside  
The slow, indignant traffic ;

**This Funny World**

To see thee thread thy lightning course  
With lightning's devious slanting,  
And watch the ineffectual horse  
In vain behind thee panting.

Yet as we hurtle, dash, and dart  
Along the streets, and scent 'em,  
I do not feel my nervous heart  
Improved by thy momentum.  
And should a sudden smash—a wreck—  
Disable thee from action,  
And I sustain a broken neck,  
Where is my satisfaction ?

Thy pace with exultation fills  
Our souls ; we mount thee gaily.  
And yet " it is the pace that kills,"  
We learn that lesson daily.  
But " Life is brief, and time's of worth,"  
Cries each misguided gloater,  
Who rides in triumph off the earth  
To Kingdom Come by motor.

## THE WHEEL OF FATE

*(With Acknowledgments to Omar Khayyám)*

[It is suggested that, in view of the dangers of our motor-ridden roads, Insurance Companies might now sell tickets at the pavement edge.]

O THOU whose eyes like beams of Morning Light  
Illume my soul : look up ! the skies are bright ;  
Let us go forth and drink the Joy of Spring,  
For biting Winter may return To-night !

Come, seek thy Bliss, the Dearest and the Best  
From out the wondrous Windows of the West—  
The Hat and Costume of thy Heart's Desire,  
And—since I love Thee—I will do the rest.

Ah, Love, yet ere we press with eager feet  
Those ways, the destined Hat and Garb to greet,  
Discretion calls, " Insure Her life and Thine,  
For there are Motorists in every Street ! "

Swift Peril lurks Behind us and Before,  
And we that sally smiling to the Store  
May fall beneath the Whirling Wheel of Fate  
Whence Dogs, and Fowls, and Men arise no more.

For I remember pausing Yesterday  
Where dead the Bird of Spring—poor chicken!—lay ;  
And, lo, a Voice within the Tavern cried,  
“ A curséd Motorist hath passed this Way ! ”

The Wheel no question makes of Eyes or Nose,  
But Here or There, as strikes the Chauffeur, goes,  
And ere the Pale Pedestrian has reached  
The Kerb he sought his Day has met its Close.

A moment's halt ; Thy foot or Mine misplaced  
Amid this mesh of traffic interlaced,  
And—no more Hats for thee ! And no more Spring,  
And no more days for Kissing. Oh, make haste !

A merchant at the kerb vends Tickets. See !  
Insurance policies for Thee and Me.  
A Thousand Pounds for Someone if we die—  
For Someone who is neither Me nor Thee !

Ah, my Belov'd, we know to our Despair  
Insurance cannot by a single Hair  
Turn Fate aside. And once beneath the Car,  
To us the Cash is neither Here nor There.

“ Insure ! ” they cry ; as though for You gone hence,  
Or Me, their cheque could furnish recompense !  
Come, where yon great Policeman lifts his Hand,  
And cross the Road 'neath that Omnipotence !

PHILOSOPHY—FOR OTHERS

BE not vexed with that or this,  
    Let it pass.  
Though your aim in life you miss,  
    Let it pass.  
Though you've got but eighteenpence  
And anxiety immense,  
'Twill not count a century hence :  
    Let it pass !

If your tooth should wildly ache,  
    Let it pass.  
If your wretched bank should break,  
    Let it pass.  
Curb your fury ; laugh " Ho-ho ! "  
In a hundred years, you know,  
These things will not matter. So  
    Let them pass !

Face the world with soul sedate,  
    Let it pass.  
If a brick falls on your pate,  
    Let it pass.  
If upon the stairs the cat  
Hurls you headlong, what of that ?  
Sit and smile upon the mat,  
    Let it pass.



## This Funny World

If grim Fortune gives you kicks,

Let them pass.

If a thief your pocket picks,

Let it pass.

Let not choler make you mad

If some mean deceitful cad

Palms on you a coin that's bad,

*Let it pass !*

Smile at wrongs and troubles dire,

Let them pass.

If you find your house on fire,

Let it pass.

Since a hundred years to come

'Twill not matter, why be glum ?

Philosophically hum

“ Let it pass ! ”

## ODE TO A FLYING MACHINE

You are cheered by the crowds,  
As you cut through the clouds,  
Your admirers are many and mighty ;  
And the " sex " with delight  
Watch you taking your flight—  
For the sex are themselves very " flighty."  
But what I'm at present unable to see  
Is how you are going to benefit me.

It is all very well  
To go up—with a yell  
From the mob when they see that you've started.  
But though high you may fly,  
You return by and by  
To the planet from which you departed.  
You come back to earth—that is always the case—  
Because you can get to no different place.

We may shortly by plane  
Go to Frankfort-on-Maine,  
Or to Stockton-on-Tees, or to Spithead.  
But we're bound to come down  
In a field or a town  
On the earth—that is frankly admitted.

## This Funny World

We can't reach some world in a pleasanter zone,  
Where nobody worries and work is unknown.

Can you bear us from here  
To a sunnier sphere,  
Where taxation they know not a word of—  
Where they furnish free meals  
Of roast pork or stewed cels,  
And dyspepsia's never been heard of—  
Where nobody ever gets jilted or shot ?—  
Oh, can you fly thither ?—alas, you can not !

There is surely some star  
Where no family jar  
And no factory bell could excite us.  
Where all eggs are new-laid,  
And all bills are marked " Paid,"  
And they never have croup or bronchitis.  
But vainly we seek that celestial scene—  
You never can reach it, O Flying Machine.

Could you soar right away  
With our troubles to-day,  
You'd delight every Strephon and Chloe,  
But the Flying Age comes,  
And it brings us no plums,  
And the pudding of life is still doughy.  
So why should I fly ?—I will stay where I am,  
Or go for a twopenny ride on a tram.

## THE CABBY'S FAREWELL TO HIS STEED

My beautiful! my beautiful! a-standing meekly by,  
Your knees are very lumpy, and you've only got one eye,  
You're troubled with the palsy, and the looseness of  
your bones

Makes me fear you'll drop to pieces if I trots yer on  
the stones.

Your tail is limp and weedy, and you've got a spavined  
hock,

And every time I looks at you I gets a nasty shock.

Your wind, my steed, is broken—like your teeth, and  
like your pride ;

Perhaps you have your beauties, but, if so, they're all  
inside.

There's one thing still about you young and fresh—your  
appetite ;

But you're no credit to the grub as you puts out of sight.

Your back is like a razor, and there's furrows in your  
flank,

Your figure often makes me blush to own you on the  
rank.

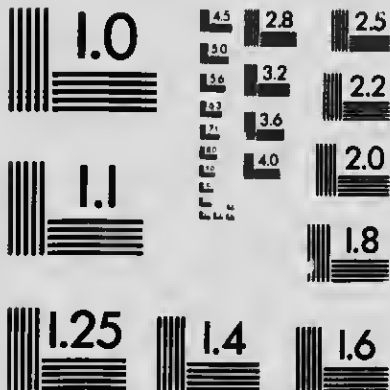
With fares inside I tremble, as I drives yer through the  
town,

For fear that when I shout " Gee up ! " you'll go and  
tumble down.



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And one true testimonial I can give yer any day :  
You ain't a likely bloomin' sort of 'orse to run away.

But trade is truly shockin', and they've tolled our  
funeral knell,

At last the time has come for us to part and say farewell.  
The motor cab has done us (and I 'ope that every fare  
Wot takes his seat inside it will get blown into the air).  
You pretty beauty !—we must part. Our luck seems  
very hard.

My destiny is selling studs, and yours the knacker's yard  
But still you've got one comfort, though the knacker's  
yard's no treat,

You won't be sent to Antwerp to be sold as potted meat.

## THE CASTLE BUILDERS

OUR souls are too big for this workaday world,  
Where toiling and trammelled we groan,  
So weaving romances  
And building fine fancies,  
Each lives in a world of his own.  
The poor little shop-girl is wooed (in her dream)  
By the lord of a castle in Spain,  
And, lost in a vision  
Of rapture Elysian,  
She leaves her new boots in the train.

The pound-a-week clerk, as he journeys to town,  
Has wealth and a knighthood in mind,  
Surveys his grand marriage,  
Then—steps from the carriage,  
And leaves his umbrella behind.  
His opulent master (who travels first class)  
Has visions—they're fitful, but sweet—  
“Life might have been sunny  
With love and less money”—  
And leaves his kid gloves on the seat!



## This Funny World

The stern-visaged spinster of forty-five springs,  
Whom no one would venture to kiss,  
Sits pensively dreaming  
Of lovers' eyes beaming,  
And lives in a region of bliss ;  
She dreams, a fair bride to the altar she's led,  
And murmurs, " How happy I am ! "  
And then—a wild flutter—  
" My pound of fresh butter !  
I've left it, oh dear, in the tram ! "

The world we enjoy is the world of our dreams,  
We are greater than life is—alack !  
But while we are gilding  
The castles we're building,  
We leave our top-coats on the rack.  
And while we're in cloudland, with beautiful schemes,  
Our sticks and our parcels are lost ;  
And yet—our romances  
And fairylike fancies  
I fancy are worth what they cost !

### OUR GREATEST COMFORT

PEERS look pale, and prophets frown,  
Most of us, with hearts that ache,  
Vow that things are upside down,  
And that life's a great mistake.  
Yet, despite our fret and fuss,  
Tears, taxation, toil, and strife,  
Fate's been very kind to us—  
Every man can find a wife.

Money's scarce, and living dear,  
Landlords at our purses pull ;  
Still, though men go short of beer,  
Maids are a'ways plentiful.  
Nature might have made them few,  
But by her indulgent plan,  
Though we are a motley crew,  
There's a wife for every man.

Croesus may, if so inclined,  
Wed the daughter of an earl ;  
Ducal diamonds seem designed  
For the shapely chorus girl.

## This Funny World

And, when dukes are all supplied,  
In his donkey-cart elate,  
Beans the coster with his bride—  
Every man can find a mate.

Atkins, taking hearts by storm,  
Many a maiden's slumber wrecks,  
Anything in uniform  
Fascinates the tender sex.  
Constables are highly prized,  
Curates have their glamour still;  
Overgrown, or undersized,  
Every Jack can find a Jill.

Though he's balder than an egg,  
Though his nose be red in tint,  
Though he has a wooden leg  
And a disconcerting squint,  
Though he's deaf and deep in debt,  
Man may to the altar go—  
There is still some Juliet  
Waiting for her Romeo.

Though he's just come out of jail,  
Though his age be eighty-five—  
Happy swain! he will not fail  
Still successfully to wive.  
So, in spite of woes and frets,  
There's a joy to lighten life—  
Leaving out the suffragettes,  
Every man can find a wife!

## A SERIOUS AFFAIR

WHEN, like poor butterflies on pins,  
Transfixed by love we wriggle,  
Man does not woo his maid with grins,  
Or kiss her with a giggle.  
The world may wear a smiling phiz  
To see a spoony pair,  
But (funny thing !) to them it is  
A Serious Affair.

Love is no joke to Romeo,  
And Jul'et doesn't titter ;  
They sigh and mope, poor things, as though  
They'd swallowed something bitter.  
And when the lover, shy and slim,  
His passion must declare  
Unto her Pa—that is to him  
A Serious Affair.

Man dare not blend with comic quips  
Love's tale, that in maid's ear drops ;  
Each wedding morn sees quivering lips  
And ladies shedding teardrops.

**This Funny World**

And, stung with rice, that, like a knife's  
Keen point, cuts everywhere,  
Love goes—to learn that married life's  
A Serious Affair.

And he who, finding Love no sport,  
Recoils from Hymen's fetters,  
Shares not the "laughter" when in Court  
They read his loving letters.  
Love is no lark—it hurts us much,  
So let us all beware,  
And (if we can) keep out of such  
A Serious Affair.

## JENNIE

*(An Idyll in "unrhymable" words)*

JENNIE smiles—oh, sweet is she!—  
As she watches at the window,  
And when I get home to tea  
There is something nice for me ;  
Muffins hot, or tarts I see—  
Jam spread thick on very thin dough.

Jennie has the quaintest way  
Fond affection's fire to keep hot ;  
Slippers ready, greeting gay,  
In her dress a floral spray,  
Little teaset on a tray,  
Kettle singing to the teapot.

Jennie trills a merry tune  
That you cannot help but echo,  
January turns to June  
When she sings, and life's a boon  
As she showers, with a spoon,  
In the teapot Orange Pekoe.

**This Funny World**

Jennie's fond of dainty froeks  
    (Not that bifureated bike-robe  
Which the sense of beauty shocks) ;  
Joys round Jennie fly in flocks,  
At her casement never knocks  
    Care, that melancholy microbe.

All the sunbeans love to catch  
    Jennie's eyes, and o'er the meadow  
And the little garden patch  
Oft they flash a kiss to snatch.  
You could ne'er find Jennie's match  
    From Jerusalem to Jeddo.

### ODE TO THE TEAPOT

HAIL thou whose comfortable form  
Supplants the fading tankard,  
Consoling Pot! in Sorrow's storm  
To thee our hopes are anchored.  
When hearts are down and sorrows up,  
In life's tempestuous sea,  
Hail then home's haven and a cup—  
A quiet cup of tea!

O Pot! what visions round thee cling,  
What tunes to banish trouble;  
The cup and spoon's melodious ring,  
The kettle's merry bubble.  
The cat, the rosy firelight glow,  
A soft hand fair to see,  
That starts the stimulating flow—  
A quiet cup of tea!

O Pot! the idol of the fair,  
Preferred to vintage fruity,  
The panacea for every care  
That racks the breast of beauty.



## This Funny World

Adored alike in huts and halls,  
 From moral censure free,  
 Quite proper when the Vicar calls—  
 That quiet cup of tea !

O Pot ! while factions rend the State,  
 And minds with wrath unsettle,  
 Thou art the only Pot elate  
 In brotherhood with Kettle.  
 Though other Pots and Kettles wage  
 Their feuds with brutal glee,  
 Thou sheddest calm 'mid battle's rage—  
 A quiet cup of tea !

O Pot ! while fusillade and frown  
 Assail the toper's toddy,  
 Thou, blameless, wearest Virtue's crown,  
 The friend of everybody.  
 'Tis sweet, since all our acts with Sin  
 Seem stained, that thou art free,  
 And that there's nothing wicked in  
 A quiet cup of tea.

O Pot, when Adam, tempest-toss'd,  
 From Eden was ejected,  
 (Alack !) when Paradise was lost,  
 And woe for us effected,  
 The sombre thought makes kind hearts grieve—  
 That 'neath the dark decree  
 There was, to comfort Mother Eve,  
 No quiet cup of tea !

## WINTRY COMFORTS

THOUGH your nose and toes it freezes,  
Throw the window open wide ;  
Frost and fog and biting breezes  
Keep your parlour purified.  
Sit and shiver, peer and peasant,  
Though for cosy warmth you le  
For if anything is pleasant  
It is certain to be wrong !

Though you're hungry, shun the plateful,  
Just a morsel you may touch,  
For, says Science, grim and fateful,  
"Everybody eats too much."  
Take in place of pork and pheasant  
Toast and water—not too strong—  
For if anything is pleasant  
It is certain to be wrong !

There is death in flowing flagons,  
Fun and flirting, toast and tea ;  
They are worse than fiery dragons  
Bent on killing you and me.

**This Funny World**

Do not smoke—that's fatal folly,  
Nor to crowded theatres throng,  
For whatever makes you jolly  
Is invariably wrong!

Thus, for mortals, poor and wealthy,  
Be it clearly understood  
That the Nice is never healthy,  
And the Nasty does you good.  
Oh, the joys of life are scrappy,  
Virtue wields a bitter thong,  
For be sure, if you are happy,  
You are doing something wrong!

## INFERNAL PAVING

*[Some reflections for the 8th of January]*

FOLKS, a week ago to-day,  
Made resolves of vast dimensions.  
Ah, but there's a place, they say,  
Thickly paved with good intentions.  
"No more smoking!" was my vow,  
Yours, perhaps, "I'll be more saving."  
Where are those intentions now?  
Gone to make infernal paving.

Eager crowds with projects great  
Met the New Year bright and curly;  
Jones said, "I won't stay out late";  
Smith said, "I will get up early."  
Brown declared, "I'll give up beer."  
Thus went Virtue's banners waving.  
But they're gone—those vows sincere,  
Gone to make infernal paving!

"I'll be loving to my wife!"  
Husband cried: "no more I'll nag her."  
Wife said, "Here ends wordy strife,  
Tongue no more shall be a dagger."

## This Funny World

Men were strong and women sweet,  
All intent on well behaving.  
Yet, poor souls, they've met defeat,  
Helped to make infernal paving!

Sheepishly we face the Year,  
Blushing for our frail behaviour,  
While beneath us—hark!—we hear  
Chuckles from the Demon Pavior.  
And the busy imps below,  
Diabolically raving,  
Dance and sing, and roar "Oho!  
Here's a grand supply of paving!"

### THE CONVENIENT CREED

THE world's a very trying place  
For men of all professions,  
And we are apt to fall from grace,  
And prone unto transgressions.  
But when you've had a little lapse,  
And palliations few are,  
'Tis nice to think that there are chaps  
A good deal worse than you are.

If A adulterates his wares,  
His self-respect grows greater  
When B he virtuously declares  
A worse adulterator.  
If Brown, the grocer, gives short weight,  
To Heaven he looks for quarter,  
In moral rectitude elate,  
Since Smith gives weight that's shorter.

The man who beats his wife may ban  
Reproach and sorrow smother,  
For there is many a harsher man  
Who beats both wife and mother.

## This Funny World

He who gets drunk—say twice a week—  
Quaffs self-approval gaily,  
For there are some—not far to seek—  
Inebriated daily.

Who steals my purse can with relief  
Dismiss compunction's rigour,  
Because he's not the biggest thief,  
For there are plenty bigger.  
He who goes burgling now and then  
With Heaven may proudly par-ley,  
And feel exalted over men  
Who burgle regularly.

The bigamist who marries twice  
May don fair Virtue's laurel,  
Convinced that he is free from vice  
And singularly moral  
In choosing only twice to wive,  
Since (with no fears to scare 'em)  
The Mormon marries four or five,  
The Moslem keeps a harem.

So, whatsoever sin you nurse,  
Though moralists decry it,  
As there is always some one worse,  
Why, you can justify it.  
Though black as night our sins may be,  
In broadcloth or in shoddy,  
We're not the worst! There's Satan. He  
Is worse than anybody.

## THE WORLD REFORMED

(*A Vision*)

THE Sun threw off Night's counterpane,  
And rose resplendent from his bed,  
And looked o'er England's wide domain—  
"Hallo! there's something wrong," he said.

He heard no cheerful crowing cock,  
No lambkin sported o'er the lea,  
No cow, no sheep, no herd, no flock!  
"Dear me!" the Sun exclaimed, "Dear me!"

No scent of toasted bacon rose,  
No whiff of kippers filled the air  
To greet the Sun's expectant nose,  
Nor was the savoury sausage there.

And lo, to his inquiring shout  
A man replied, with quivering lip,  
"Fish, flesh, and fowl are blotted out—  
We're in the Vegetarian's grip!"

"No meat?" exclaimed the Sun, "dear me!"  
The poor man wiped away a tear,  
"No meat!—and that's not all," said he,  
"We're under Temperance Law—No beer!"

"No beer, no whisky, wine, or rum,  
No flowing bowl of jovial type;  
And now the Anti-smoker's come  
And issued his decree—'No pipe!'"



"No pipe!" The Sun, extremely pained,  
Surveyed his visage lean and long.

"How's that?" "Because," the man explained,  
"They say that smoking's very wrong."

"Well," smiled the Sun, "to soothe your breast,  
To cricket you can still resort."

"No," quoth the man, "that's been suppressed—  
They said we were too fond of sport."

"Then, since Reform has stopped the ball,  
Perchance you go, your cares to drown,  
To theatre or to music-hall?"

"No," moaned the man, "they've been put down!"

"With cards, then, do you pass away  
The time in houses, halls, and huts?"

"Well," quoth the man, "they let us play,  
But only once a year—for nuts!"

"Well, well!" the Sun cried, getting warm,  
"Your earth must be a happy place  
Now all the zealots of Reform  
Are governing the human race."

"Oh," quoth the man (a knife he drew),  
"The race committed suicide,  
And now I've told their doom to you  
I'll do the same!" He did—and died.

## THE MODERN HERO

YOUNG man, if you've an honest face,  
A head that keeps you level,  
If you are not in debt, disgrace,  
Or drink—in fact, a "devil,"  
Then hope not to be popular,  
Or win romantic passion,  
Your virtue is a fatal bar,  
For virtue's out of fashion.

Who is the idol of the hour  
That quaffs joy's vintage fruity?  
The Scallywag. His glance has power  
To thrill the heart of beauty.  
Your honest soul, who keeps the peace,  
Who's not with vices laden,  
And isn't known to the police,  
Won't suit the modern maiden.

While goodness in the cold may lag,  
Compelled to keep its distance,  
The fascinating Scallywag  
Gives relish to existence;

**This Funny World**

The Scallywag, that dashing dog,  
Who gambles, swears, and quarrels,  
Who dances on the Decalogue  
And hasn't any morals.

If you've abducted some one's wife,  
Or shot a man to Hades,  
The touching glamour of your life  
Will thrill the lovely ladies.  
For modest virtue's out of vogue,  
Its charm has sunk to zero,  
And he who is the greatest rogue  
Shall be the greatest hero.

ODE

*On Shakespeare's Birthday*

I DREAM to-day of you, William,  
I dream to-day of you ;  
'Tis sad to think you never gave  
The Press an interview.  
And so it is denied to us  
To know, beyond all hope,  
What was your favourite soap, William,  
You : favourite brand of soap.

You were a famous bard, William,  
A very famous bard ;  
Yet you were never interviewed !  
It does seem very hard.  
What was your size in hats and boots  
No paragraph asserts,  
Nor if you wore white shirts, William,  
White or coloured shirts.

W<sup>h</sup> should so love to hear, William,  
So dearly love to hear  
If you enjoyed a quiet pipe,  
And whether you liked beer.

**This Funny World**

And whether harbers shaved your chin,  
Or—careful of your pelf—  
You always shaved yourself, William,  
Shaved your chin yourself.

'Tis hidden from our ken, William,  
'Tis hidden from our ken,  
What you employed to write your Plays—  
A peneil or a pen.  
For, though you were a man of parts,  
With brain of extra size,  
You didn't advertise, William,  
You didn't advertise.

We've very often read, William,  
We've very often read  
That in your will, to Mrs. S.  
You left your second hed.  
The hest one you hestowed elsewhere ;  
And, filled with discontent,  
We wonder where it went, William,  
We wonder where it went.

We strive in vain to guess, William,  
We strive in vain to guess  
That dear Dark Lady's name, and why  
She caused you such distress.  
We rake the ashes of the past,  
But still no clue we eluteh,  
Which galls us very much, William,  
Galls us very much.

## Ode on Shakespeare's Birthday

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What was the Sonnets' plot, William,

The Sonnets' mystic plot ?

And who was Mr. W. H. ?

Alas ! you answer not.

And, tortured still by wild surmise,

We ask—Was Hamlet mad ?

It really is too bad, William,

It really is too bad.

We're told, despite your fame, William,

Despite your wondrous fame,

That you were not yourself at all,

But had another name.

They say those Plays were Bacon's Works,

And if they say what's true,

Then who on earth were you, William,

Who on earth were you ?

## THE ARK

### *A Nautical Ballad*

OH, Captain Noah was a grand old salt,  
And he skippered a grand old bark,  
He chewed his quid, and he sailed, he did,  
In command of the good ship Ark.  
So, messmates, hoist your tarry slacks,  
And hail him with respect,  
For what about us poor Toms and Jacks  
Had the old Noah's Ark got wrecked ?

#### *Chorus.*

Had the old Noah's Ark got wrecked, my boys,  
'Twould have been, as you'll detect,  
A very bad case for our Island race  
Had the old Noah's Ark got wrecked !

Brave Captain Noah, he kept the bridge  
In every storm and gale,  
And to Shem he bawled, " Let me be called  
Whenever you sight a sail."

## The Ark

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" Ay, ay ! " says Shem, and " Ay, ay ! " says Ham,  
For, in nautical dialect,  
Shouts Noah, " We're none of us worth a d—n  
If the old Noah's Ark gets wrecked ! "

### *Chorus.*

" If the old Noah's Ark gets wrecked, my boys,  
Says the grand old Ark-iteet,  
" Why, the beasts," says he, " will be all at sea  
If the old Noah's Ark gets wrecked ! "

So Shem and Ham did double watch  
In case the craft got sunk,  
While Japhet lay and groaned all day  
" Heave ho ! " down in his bunk.  
And the beasts, that went in two by two,  
Felt the stormy sea's effect,  
But with deeks well caulked, Davy Jones she baulked,  
And the Ark-did NOT get wrecked.

### *Chorus.*

Had the old Noah's Ark got wrecked, my boys,  
Through terapest or neglect,  
Why, the British Lion would have gone to Zion,  
Had the old Noah's Ark got wrecked.

Then here's to Noah, the captain 'bold,  
And here's to Ham, the mate,  
And here's to Shem, and all of them !  
For think of our sad fate—

boys,



**This Funny World**

Yes, think of our unhappy fate,  
The Empire 'twould have checked ;  
What an outlook black for the Union Jack,  
Had the old Noah's Ark got wrecked !

*Chorus.*

Had the old Noah's Ark got wrecked, my boys,  
With her cargo all select,  
(Heave ho, with a cheer !) we shouldn't be here,  
Had the old Noah's Ark got wrecked !

ODE TO THE NORTH POLE

As shy as a Whitstable oyster,  
Reluctant the knife to admit,  
As coy as a nun in a cloister,  
Or debtor evading a writ,  
You hid from the wooers who hailed you,  
And chilled each adventurous soul—  
In vain! for at last they've unveiled you,  
O Pole!

In icy seclusion, you cared not  
For paragraphs, boomsters, or bards,  
You sought no advertisement, bared not  
Your charms on pictorial cards.  
And though in this age, to arrive at  
Publicity's every one's goal,  
You only desired to be private,  
O Pole!

You never encouraged adorers ;  
In solitude dwelling apart  
From hordes of audacious explorers  
Intent on exploring your heart.

## This Funny World

But, keen as the hound for the quarry,  
Or cat for the mouse in its hole,  
They hunted you down. And I'm sorry,  
O Pole!

Alas! your ineffable quiet  
Is broken, and soon on the air  
The telephone tinkle will riot,  
Loud voices will yell "ARE YOU THERE?"  
And traders in many a boat you  
Will see, bringing cotton and coal,  
And soon they'll be eager to "float" you,  
O Pole!

Soon Jerry will startle your regions,  
Defacing your picturesque nooks  
With villas; and tourists in legions  
Will "do" you—conducted by Cooks.  
And demagogues (some of them beery)  
Their chapter of wrongs will unroll,  
And hatred will fill you for Peary,  
O Pole!

Policeman and paupers will storm you,  
A navy you'll get (at high cost),  
And taxes and toil will inform you  
That civilisation's a frost.  
And learning our civilized story,  
I'm certain you'll wish, on the whole,  
We'd left you alone in your glory,  
O Pole!

## THE MEDICINE MAN

*(Two Pictures)*

### I—THE MEDICAL STUDENT

WILDER than a spotted leopard,  
Hotter than a blazing coal,  
Or a curry cayenne-peppered,  
He's a lively soul !

Loud of lung and fond of whisky,  
Out upon the spree he goes ;  
Stormier than the Bay of Biscay  
When a tempest blows.

Pandemonium he raises,  
Roaring ribald madrigals,  
Bids policemen go to blazes,  
Raids the music halls.

With the orchestra he grapples,  
Tears the seats up by the roots,  
Pelts the vocalist with apples,  
Pears, and other fruits.

Smashing windows, w. .ng bloaters,  
Like an Indian on the trail  
Through the streets he ramps, and voters  
Fly with faces pale.

Everybody who is prudent  
Hides himself, or runs away,  
When the bold Britannic student  
Marches out to play !

## This Funny World

## II—THE FAMILY DOCTOR

Clad in black, with grave expression  
Here's the doctor. Rat-tat-tat!  
Ornament of his profession,  
With his polished hat.

No man's look was ever wiser,  
So the solemn doctor thrives,  
And is medical adviser  
To our aunts and wives.

Disciplined 'neath Physic's banner,  
He will blandly bow and say,  
In his perfect, bedside manner,  
"How are we to-day?"

"Tongue and pulse . . . H'm! rest's essential."  
Thus our reverence he gains,  
And the patient confidential,  
Tells her aches and pains.

"No; that cough won't be a fixture,  
Strength's returning more and more,  
Stay in bed and take the mixture  
Daily as before."

Who would think our trusted, prudent  
Doctor, with the trousers' crease,  
Once, a wild and rowdy student,  
Fought with the police?

### MISSING REMEDIES

To banish humanity's ills  
With knowledge that beats Aristotle's,  
Here's Science with boxes of pills,  
And tabloids in dear little bottles.  
From Poles to Equator, from Chili to Chiswick,  
We live in the Mighty Millennium of Physic.

Poor mortals, grown feeble and faint,  
Prince, public, and priest in the rostrum,  
Each bears his peculiar complaint,  
And swallows his favourite nostrum.  
And Nature announces, by meadow and river,  
Big pills for your nerves, and small pills for your liver.

Professors are ready in flocks  
(Their circulars carry conviction),  
For one-and-three-halfpence a box  
To cure every sort of affliction.  
Yet where is the cure for that terrible wrecker  
Of joy—that affliction, an empty exchequer ?

## This Funny World

Blue-spectacled Science each day  
Discovers new things with long titles,  
To give us new vigour and slay  
The microbes that play on our vitals.  
Yet, though for the dose we would gladly pay double,  
When lovesick we can't find a balm for the trouble.

Of "cures" there's a marvellous lot,  
Yet War still prevails with its rancour,  
And still on the market there's not  
One cure for the heartache—that canker.  
And oh, for some wizard with skill to invent  
A cure for that common complaint, discontent!

ODE TO MR. MARCONI

[Wireless telegraphy has been the means of saving many thousands of lives from wrecked vessels.]

THE world, sir, ought to wreath your brow  
With Honour's best and brightest laurels ;  
But it is occupied just now  
With thoughts of wars and quarrels.

The world is filled with discontent,  
And man, a growler and a girder,  
Is always striving to invent  
Some novel mode of murder.

Since Cain, with rustic bludgeon, spoiled  
The earthly prospects of his brother,  
Mankind have chiefly aimed and toiled  
At killing one another.

From clubs, that made our brothers quail,  
To knives, expressing dark intentions,  
Then swords and guns—thus runs the tale  
Of murderous inventions.

Then Maxim, dynamite, and bomb—  
Thus our resourcefulness increases  
For blowing Harry, Dick, or Tom  
Into a million pieces.



## This Funny World

And, looking round, we're sometimes shocked,  
While dismal apprehensions fill us,  
To see the world so amply stocked  
With implements to kill us.

The warship looms with menace dire,  
The motor thrills us to the centre,  
Each gate and fence is barbed with wire  
(A curse on that inventor !)

Thus Science, with expanding mind,  
Invents new dooms on land and water ;  
And even aeroplanes, we find,  
Are meant for war and slaughter.

But while from these devices grim,  
Death peers, with visage pale and bony,  
You war with Death, you steal from him  
His prey, O brave Marconi !

You might have exercised your mind  
On some fresh chemical corrosive,  
To burn us, or have tried to find  
Another high explosive.

You might have worked for death and strife,  
Like others, with invention tireless ;  
But no ! you leagued yourself with life,  
And chose to give us " Wireless."

Yet, though our grateful ode is paid,  
I fear your work for man's salvation  
Won't pay so well as something made  
For man's annihilation.

IF WE DIDN'T HAVE TO EAT

IF on air and dewdrops pearly  
We could flourish, like the flowers,  
It would ease life's hurly-burly,  
And reduce our working hours.  
We should save a mint of money  
That we spend on bread and meat,  
Though it would seem rather funny  
If we didn't have to eat.

No more sowing, no more reaping,  
And no longer should we growl  
At the prices upward leaping  
Of our flesh and fish and fowl.  
No more cooks, and no more waiters,  
No more fortunes made from wheat,  
No more food adulterators,  
If we didn't have to eat.

No more butcher's boys for orders,  
No more eggs to boil or fry,  
And—delight for hapless boarders—  
No more resurrection pie.

## This Funny World

No more daily bread to pray for,  
And—our bliss would be complete—  
No more broken plates to pay for,  
If we didn't have to eat.

No more troublous dinner question,  
No more traders with their bills,  
No more pangs of indigestion,  
No more "liver," no more pills.  
We should gain a lot of leisure,  
But, though that would be a treat,  
We should lose a lot of pleasure  
If we didn't have to eat.

## BEYOND RECALL.

" Fate cannot harm me: I have dined to-day."

Old Time, they tell me, is hurrying up  
With terrible troubles, of snake-like brood,  
To spoil my serenity, poison my cup,  
To rob me of heaven and tax my food,  
Yet I gibe at him rudely, that Ancient Man.  
My wealth he may steal and my health attack,  
But, whatever his weapons of blight or ban,  
The dinners I've eaten he can't take hack !

I've had my innings of glorious youth,  
And I gibe at him rudely, that Ancient Man ;  
I've had my kisses from Rosie and Ruth,  
Ah, rob me of those, you old thief, if you can !  
Those hours of sweethearting under the moon  
Time cannot recover, whatever his knack,  
Nor the scent of the roses I've gathered in June ;  
And the dinners I've eaten he can't get hack !

The friends who loved me when life was young,  
The money I've spent, and the wine I've quaffed,  
The books I've read and the songs I've sung,  
The jokes I've had and the laughs I've laughed,

## This Funny World

The Christmas parties, the nights at the play,  
The pipes I've smoked till their stems were black—  
I chuckle!—Time never can take them away,  
And the dinners I've eaten he can't get back!

So Time may come with his threatening frown,  
To steal my pleasures and bring me woes;  
He may break me up, he may knock me down,  
But I snap my fingers under his nose.  
For stored away in a golden room  
There are golden days; and when nights are black  
I bring them out to enliven the gloom—  
The joys I've enjoyed that he can't take back.

So, friends and brothers, come laugh with me,  
And still together our jest we'll crack;  
Defying old Time in our optimist glee,  
For the dinners we've eaten he can't get back!

ck—

lack

### ODE TO A MATCH

RED-HEADED friend ! though bards in flocks  
Abound, for thee none sings his liking,  
Though (whether on or off the box)  
An object singularly striking.  
A tribute might be worse bestowed,  
So time from loftier themes I snatch  
To render thee a little ode,  
O Match !

At morn, when those alarm-clocks whizz  
That shatter dreams and slumbers settle,  
When such a frightful rush there is  
To light the fire and boil the kettle ;  
When there is tea in haste to brew,  
And ham to cook with all despatch,  
Where should we be, deprived of you,  
O Match ?

I muse upon our early sires  
Who, crouching, toiled in wintry weather—  
Those patient souls—to light their fires  
By rubbing lumps of wood together.

## This Funny World

When babes were fretful in the night,  
When wives heard burglars force the latch,  
It must have been a painful plight,  
That frantic rubbing for a light,  
O Match!

Red-headed friend of all who smoke,  
Men offer thee no benediction,  
But they would find it was no joke  
To have to light their pipes by friction.  
And when, ten miles from anywhere,  
With all their matches gone, they scratch  
Their polls in anguish and despair,  
They know thy worth and feel it there,  
O Match!

Thy unassuming wood or wax  
Embodies vaster powers than thunder  
To bring a house down, level stacks,  
Or raze a town (thou Little Wonder!),  
And men to thy alluring shape  
Still their implicit trust attach  
For finding out a gas escape,  
O Match!

## A TALE OF A BUN

I MET a small boy at the top of the Strand,  
With a tear in his eye and a bun in his hand.  
"Oh, why, little boy," I inquired, "do you cry?"  
And he woefully answered, "I've eaten a fly!"

"And why did you eat it?" I asked, with a frown.  
"It looked like a currant before it went down,"  
He sadly responded, with tears on the run;  
"But look! there's a wing of it left in the bun!"

"Well, what does that matter?" I said. "Dry your  
eyes;

You'll meet far worse troubles than swallowing flies."

"No, I shan't," he replied, as his nether lip curled,

"For a fly's the most dangerous beast in the world."

"But that one," I said, "was cremated, you see,  
Before you consumed it." "That's true," answered he.

"And so," I observed, "there's no cause for alarm,  
For a fly that's been baked cannot do you much harm."



**This Funny World**

He beamed, and with gratitude said, "Have a bite."  
"No, thanks," I replied, "but I'm glad you're all right."  
And he stood, as I went on my journey due South,  
With a smile on his face and the bun in his mouth.

The urchin to-day gets from Knowledge's store  
A much bigger bun than the urchin of yore.  
But trouble attends every blessing that's won :  
Alas! there is always a fly in the bun.

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right."  
th,  
th.

### SIXPENCE

WHEN you and I were little hoys  
(Or little girls) with little toys,  
What was the crown of all our joys ?  
Sixpence !

O childhood ! O lost happy land,  
Where we in ecstasy would stand  
On getting, from some kindly hand,  
Sixpence !

What, when we flew on hoyhood's feet,  
To us threw open heaven complete—  
The lovely Circus (cheapest seat)—  
Sixpence !

And when, hy grim parental power  
Coerced, we viewed with tearful glower  
The money-box that swallowed our  
Sixpence !

And now, arrived at man's estate,  
We still discern its worth and weight,  
Though less we may appreciate  
Sixpence.

## This Funny World

Whene'er I take my walks abroad,  
I see things in profusion stored  
For any one who can afford  
Sixpence.

A plate of meat, potatoes, greicus  
(For persons of restricted means),  
Or heaps of monthly magazines—  
Sixpence.

What sends a wire to cause a stir ?  
What makes inferiors defer ?  
What makes the waiter call you " sir " ?  
Sixpence.

O little coin, a tender spot  
For you I keep. I grieve a lot  
To think the income tax is not  
Sixpence.

In fact sometimes, amid my mirth,  
I think that nothing on this earth—  
Not even life itself—is worth  
Sixpence.

And so its praises I shall shout,  
And so I say, with soul devout,  
Friends, may we never be without  
Sixpence.

### A JESTER'S COMPLAINT

With the bells on my crest,  
With a jape or a jest,  
And a fitting expression of unction,  
If I tickle your rib  
With the point of my nib,  
I am simply fulfilling my function.  
For I live by my wits  
(And my humorous hits  
Are exceptional value for money) ;  
But his pay I begrudge  
To a comical judge—  
For a judge isn't paid to be funny.

When with anguish and awe,  
You are dragged into law,  
And your means are by no means extensive,  
Say your tailor (the brute)  
Brings a Chancery suit,  
'Tis a suit that's extremely expensive.  
Say you're sued by a wench  
For a "breach," and the Bench  
Makes you squirm with his merriment sunny,  
Then you feel (as you look  
Like a worm on a hook)  
That a judge isn't paid to be funny.

## This Funny World

As a plaintiff you're racked  
By the jokes that are cracked,  
And you wince when your place is defendant's,  
While his ludship, with glee,  
Strives to win the " He-he ! "  
Of the Court, and convulse the attendants.  
There are wags on the stage  
Who makes jokes for a wage  
(An employment that isn't all honey) ;  
And (like me) they begrudge  
The weak jokes of a judge  
Who would never get paid to be funny !

t's,

## ODE TO THE BLOATER

[In view of its cheapness, the bloater probably represents a nutritive value greater than all other foods.—*Lancet.*]

HAIL, humble fish, the poor man's friend,  
Boon to the impecunious voter,  
Now let thy savoury scent ascend—  
Nutritious Bloater!

When poverty brings purses low,  
We hail thee—if discreetly salted—  
And whether hard or soft of roe,  
Thou art exalted.

When unemployment cuts off beef,  
On Sorrow's tide a silvery floater,  
Thou art poor Hunger's best relief,  
Benignant Bloater!

When strike and lock-out, waging war,  
On chops for dinner put a stopper,  
Thou givest man thy silver for  
His modest copper.

Yea, though the salmon wins on earth  
A loftier place and smiles more sunny,  
From thee we get the greatest wealth  
For smallest money.

**This Funny World**

O gencrous fish, 'twas ever thus ;  
The world—a blind and foolish doater  
On lordly salmon—makes no fuss  
About the bloater.

But in adversity we find  
Our truest friends ; so, 'mongst all dishes,  
To thee the sovereignty's assigned :  
Hail, King of Fishes !

Rich feast upon the scanty board,  
Hail, heat and energy promoter !  
Blest is the man who can afford  
A penny bloater.

### THE UNAPPRECIATED

WHO, when you were a little chap,  
" Held " you, relieving mother's lap,  
And dutifully gave you pap ?

Father.

Who took your sticky kiss of jam  
Upon his whiskers like a lamb ?  
Who fondly wheeled you in the pram ?

Father.

Who used to threaten what he'd do,  
But didn't do it ? As you grew,  
Who handed down his clothes to you ?

Father.

Who, coming home in wrath immense,  
Would fill the place with turbulence,  
Then (after dinuer) give you pence ?

Father.

Who, admonition sparing not,  
Bestowed on you a daily lot  
Of sound advice ?—which you forgot—

Father.



## This Funny World

When childhood's days were left behind,  
 Who did you think was rather blind,  
 A person of inferior mind ?

Father.

Who, puffing at his pipe forlorn,  
 With outward tolerance is borne,  
 But looked upon with inward scorn ?

Father.

Who now is seen but seldom heard,  
 Because, if he puts in a word,  
 His daughters think him most absurd ?

Papa.

Who has, with what good grace he can,  
 To learn that by the modern plan  
 The child is father to the man ?

Father.

And who, though now kept out of sight,  
 While Youth the headstrong flies its kite,  
 Proves generally to be right ?

FATHER !

## A BALLAD OF PANTOMIME

KING PANTOMIME marches exultantly in  
With merry attendants, a numerous throng ;  
King Pantomime wears an exuberant grin,  
And rouscs the echoes with many a song.  
King Pantomime enters  
With gorgeous inventors,  
With damsels who'll capture all hearts very soon ;  
And homage we render  
To spangles and splendour,  
But where are the Clown and the Pantaloon ?

Distressed Cinderellas grace many a stage,  
With envious sisters of uglier stamp ;  
Bold Jacks with grim giants in warfare engage,  
And happy Aladdin appears with his lamp.  
Up beanstalks attractive,  
Climb youthful and active  
Adventurers, seeking the realms of the moon ;  
Good fairies thwart witches,  
And heroes win riches—  
But where are the Clown and the Pantaloon ?

## This Funny World

Hail Crusoe—with Friday—who now will appear  
 On Saturday, Monday, and all other nights !  
 Hail demons and elves and monstrosities queer !  
 Hail beautiful Princes in beautiful tights !  
 Hail Queens who give wizards  
 Keen pains in their gizzards,  
 Who bless the Princess and her love-stricken coon !  
 Hail comical majors,  
 With troopers (old stagers)—  
 But where are the Clown and the Pantaloon ?

The Principal Boy is a very nice girl,  
 And her mother, the widow's a humorous man,  
 And the belles of the ballet deliciously twirl  
 Nimble-toed, and with waists you could easily span.  
 O sweet pirouetters,  
 They make us their debtors,  
 With ravishing smiles for us all (blissful boon !)  
 And yet, as they flutter,  
 We wistfully mutter  
 " But where are the Clown and the Pantaloon ? "

The Principal Girl is as pretty as paint  
 (Ah me, to imprint a fond kiss on those lips !)  
 The funny man's drollery's awfully quaint,  
 The whimsical dog, with his quizzical quips.  
 But where is that joker  
 With bright red-hot poker,

## A Ballad of Pantomime

139

And brimstone and treacle, and very large spoon,  
To dose the poor " Old 'un " ?  
Ah ! memories golden—  
Where—where are the Clown and the Pantaloon ?

Mirth-maker in motley,  
Who came down so hotly  
On " bobbies ", what larks and what laughter you made,  
O time-honoured jester !  
Their new fun makes less stir  
Than yours, in the jolly old harlequinade.  
When Pantomime comes in,  
Like duff with no plums in  
It seems since we lost you—our vanished buffoon.  
You made the world younger,  
And sad hearts in hunger  
Sigh " Where are the Clown and the Pantaloon ? "

## THE BANISHED GHOST

The feast, the dance, the Christmas tree,  
Had filled the house with laughter,  
And now the lights were out—'twas three  
O'clock the morning after.  
The guests, by weariness induced,  
Were wrapped in heavy slumbers,  
When in there crept the ghost that used  
To haunt the Christmas Numbers.

Once, as a terror great and grim,  
He reigned, that spectral flitter ;  
But no one now believed in him,  
Which made him rather bitter.  
An outcast, branded with disdain,  
" A worn-out superstition "—  
" This night," quoth he, " I'll try to gain  
Once more my old position."

So up he went, as three o'clock  
Was tolling from the minster,  
Stalked in a room—he didn't knock—  
And woke a lonely spinster.

## The Banished Ghost

141

She did not blush nor shake in bed,  
But, to his dire confusion,  
She calmly stared at him, and said,  
"An optical illusion!"

She turned and snored. He heard the sound,  
And gasped, "I can't endure it!"  
And fled, and entered with a bound  
The chamber of a curate.  
He leered. The curate did not cry,  
Nor pray, nor shriek and shiver,  
But glared at him and said "Mince pie!  
A ghost? Pooh! it's my liver."

The baffled spectre gave a croak,  
And vanished through the plaster  
Into an upper room, and woke  
The mistress and the master.  
She gazed and whispered, "John, look here!  
A ghost—a ghost, I'm certain!"  
Her husband laughed: "I see it, dear—  
The moonlight on the curtain!"

The ghost retired with furious look  
And gibberings dramatic;  
Then—happy thought!—"I'll try the cook,"  
He grinned, and sought the attic.  
He tried the cook for two long hours,  
He groaned to scare and shake her,  
Shrieked, rattled chains, used all his powers,  
In vain—he couldn't wake her!

**This Funny World**

He gave it up, and disappeared,  
Perspiring, and with curses,  
To rouse, with his contortions weird,  
The children and their nurses.  
He chuckled, " Here I'll give them fits ! "  
But no ! with visage thinner  
He heard the nurse say, " Nightmare ! It's  
The goose we had for dinner ! "

This unbelief so mortified  
The poor old spectral schemer,  
" I'll emigrate ! " in grief he cried,  
And hid upon a steamer.  
'Twas wrecked. Poor ghost, this knocked him flat,  
He sank, 'mid wild commotion,  
And now he haunts the mermaids at  
The bottom of the ocean.

## THE GHOST THAT HAD NO CLOTHES

### *A Christmas Story*

BEWARE! any mortal who boasts  
He'd sleep in a churchyard undaunted,  
And flouts the existence of ghosts,  
May find it his fate to be haunted.  
Draw close. Lock the door. Sip your Christmassy  
nectar,  
And list to the terrible tale of a spectre.

Horatio Wellington Grimm

Adorned a good post in the City,  
His wife was devoted to him,  
And she was uncommonly pretty.  
While he, though distinctly inclined to be bandy,  
Wore superfine suits, and was known as a dandy.

His weaknesses must be confessed :

Though fond of fine fashions in raiment,  
His tailor he deeply distressed  
By failing to make any payment.  
He gambled a little—at bridge and backgammon,  
And had a remarkable taste for tinned salmon.

That fondness, alas, sealed his fate.

The grocer—a friend and a neighbour—  
One day sent a tin which he ate,  
And swifter than pistol or sabre,  
It slew him ! . . . Sore stricken, but brave in endurance,  
His heartbroken wife went and drew his insurance.

Cut off in his prime by this stroke,  
And uttering many a sad " Oh ! "



## This Funny World

Poor Grimm was concerned when he woke  
 To find himself merely a shadow—  
 A ghost among ghosts ! and he longed for hot toddy  
 To warm his cold spirit deprived of its body.

The ghosts sighed " There's no toddy here,  
 No cash, and no worship of Mammon.

What made you a ghost ? " With a tear

Grimm mournfully answered, " Tinned salmon ! "

Then, shaking with anger—he strove not to hide it—

" I'll haunt that vile grocer," he said, " who supplied it ! "

" You can't ! " croaked the spectres with mirth :

" No ghost (Grimm grew visibly paler)

E'er walked without clothes upon earth,

And you, through not paying your tailor,

Have not, by our ghost laws (Grimm listened with  
 loathing),

The ghost of a claim to the ghost of your clothing ! "

And lo ! the poor dandy looked black

To find, when he scanned himself closer,

He hadn't a rag to his back

In which to appear to the grocer.

" You're doomed," said the ghosts to his poor apparition,

" To see, not be seen—a most awkward position."

" It is ! " exclaimed Grimm in despair.

" That grocer SHALL see me, the varmint.

I'll haunt him and stiffen his hair.

Won't one of you lend me a garment ?

I must see my widow, since fate here has tossed me,

To tell her how sorry I am that she's lost me ! "

The Ghost that had no Clothes 145

"No ghost lends his garb. That's our rule,"

They croaked; so with frenzied endeavour  
Grimm went, though he felt like a fool,  
Without any clothing whatever.

To hunt up that grocer, and—if he could do it—  
To haunt him. "Tinned salmon!" quoth Grimm—"he  
shall rue it!"

The grocer was out when the spook  
Arrived, so (affection compelling)

He went, all expectant, to look

Once more at his wife and his dwelling.

And found, with emotion that baffles reporting,  
His dear Mrs. Grimm and the grocer were courting!

He croaked at them, clutched at their hair,  
And gibered, to harrow and daunt them,  
In vain! They seemed quite unaware  
Of him and his efforts to haunt them.

Alack! it was true, as the spectres had told him,  
As he had no clothes on—they couldn't behold him!

The grocer departed at ten,

He kissed her (the beast was half-headed!)

And said "Wait till Christmas! ah, then

(He kissed her again) we'll be wedded."

And off he went, strutting along like a bantam,  
Nor dreamt he was dogged by a furious phantom.

Poor spirit! his anguish was keen,

That grocer he yearned to dismember,

But shadowed him, powerless, unseen,

From May until dreary December.

The widow he haunted, too, nights without number,  
Yet, sleepless himself, saw her tranquilly slumber.

'Twas Christmas Eve ; grocer in bed,  
And wedding all fixed for the morrow.  
The ghost, with a pain in his head,  
Stood watching ; and, lo ! in his sorrow  
A thought came. . . . He sprang with soft step like a  
lamb on  
The pillow and whispered " Tinned salmon ! Tinned  
salmon ! "

The grocer, with far-away glance,  
Arose (the Grimm ghost seemed to wait it)  
And opened, like one in a trance,  
A big tin of salmon, and ate it.

And lo ! as the Christmas bells drew kind hearts closer,  
There passed into Ghostland the ghost of a grocer !

Since sleepless nights drive you insane  
If one on another you pile 'em,  
Poor Grimm, worn to rags by the strain,  
Was sent to a ghostly asylum ;  
And sweet Mrs. Grimm, haunted uow by no spectre,  
Is happily wed to a ticket-collector.

Beware ! heed the moral, I pray,  
Good people, from gentry to gaolers,  
And make up your minds from to-day  
To keep out of debt to your tailors.  
Avoid rash assertions that " Ghosts are all gammon,"  
And never for supper indulge in tinned salmon !

THE GROAN OF AN ILL-TREATED GHOST

TIME was when all people—or most—  
With visages visibly whitened,  
Would quail at the cry "There's a Ghost!"  
And run away terribly frightened.

When family mansions—the baron's, the rector's,  
The knight's, and the squire's—had their family spectres.

In castles, mysterious groans  
The soul of the visitor daunted,  
Grim skeletons rattled their bones,  
And all empty houses were haunted.  
And all moated granges had spirits unsightly  
That walked in white garments at twelve o'clock nightly.

In those days—at Christmas at least—  
Folks kept up the good old traditions,  
They talked when they'd finished their feast  
Of goblins and gaunt apparitions.  
Weird tales round the Yule-log that woke up the sleepy,  
That made their hair stiffen and made them feel "creepy."

And why did they quiver and quake ?  
Because long ago, by some thickhead,  
'Twas spread, (an appalling mistake !)  
That ghosts were all harmful and wicked.  
And in a false light I was always exhibited  
As some one who'd either been murdered or gibbeted !

When Jones, my old chum, bought a goose  
One night before Christmas—a rough one—  
I stood by his side ('twas no use !)  
And wanted to yell " It's a tough one ! "  
He bought it, but no knife or fork could he sheathe in it,  
And though his guests tried they could not get their  
teeth in it.

I went every midnight to Smith's,  
To act as his guardian and sentry,  
But he thinks that ghosts are all myths,  
And so when a thief made his entry  
I could not " appear " to wake Smith with a warning,  
And thus he got robbed—as he found the next morning.

My aunt, poor old soul, unawares  
Tripped over a cat on the landing,  
And tumbled down twenty-four stairs  
Adjacent to where I was standing ;  
Her leg's now in splints, and my spirit I'm grieved in,  
For I could have saved her had I been believed in.

The Groan of an Ill-treated Ghost 149

I've wandered from pillar to post  
To find a position and grab it—  
Where folks would believe in a ghost  
And give me a house to inhabit.  
For then they'd behold me—a guide and protector,  
A useful and really benevolent spectre.

I've walked from the Wye to the Wash,  
I've tested young maids and old fogies,  
But ghosts they declare are "all bosh!"  
And children now scoff at "black bogies."  
I ask for no food, wages, washing, or pension,  
And yet I'm rejected and called "an invention"!

And so because people lack faith,  
No welcome I get in their houses,  
But mope, an invisible wraith,  
Cut off from their Christmas carouses.  
My one bit of pleasure, unseen by the scorners,  
Is watching the kissing that's done in sly corners!

So, misunderstood from the first,  
I've always been kept at a distance;  
And now it has come to the worst—  
This age says I have no existence!  
I am not believed in! Conceive my position—  
A ghost that's dismissed as "a dark superstition"!

## This Funny World

Yet bad ghosts and good roam in space ;  
 Oh, friends, you may doubt it ; but could one  
 Of you take a look at my face,

" Ah, this ghost," you'd cry, " is a good one ! "  
 But banished by sceptics of tendencies risible,  
 Since I'm not believed in *I can't become visible.*

I roam round the earth, and I yearn  
 To warn folk of troubles and dangers,  
 To do an old chum a good turn,  
 And even to benefit strangers.  
 A friend, could they see me, they'd quickly perceive in me,  
 And see me they could—**IF THEY'D ONLY BELIEVE IN ME !**

The stupid world bids me avaunt,  
 The world thinks it's wise in its folly,  
 But if I had some one to haunt,  
 He'd find me surprisingly jolly.  
 For though ghosts are victims of popular rumour,  
 You'll find with good spirits there's always good humour.

Mistrusted, yet conscious of worth,  
 My lot is discouraging—very ;  
 For me there's no pleasure on earth,  
 Though I'm irrepressibly merry.  
 So, scorned by your Twentieth Century host,  
 I've sadly decided to give up the ghost !

## THE GHOST'S REVENGE

### *A Christmas Tale*

WHEN Mr. Theophilus Crooks  
Retired, his position was sunny,  
His fortune, as shown by his books,  
Was nearly a million of money,  
(It gladdens a man when a million he handles !)  
All made from the making of soap and wax candles.

He bought a Baronial Hall ;  
He ordered (in oil) a collection  
Of ancestors lordly and tall ;  
He bought and hung up for inspection  
A Family Tree (his particular boast),  
But lacked one distinction—a Family Ghost.

This gap left his Hall incomplete ;  
The one drop of gall in life's nectar.  
Confound it ! a family seat  
Devoid of a family spectre !  
And, though he was eager to buy one or hire one,  
He couldn't for love or for money acquire one.



No Maskelyne's magic (nor Cook's)  
 Could raise him a spirit from Hades.  
 Professional dealers in spooks  
 Submitted their "vanishing ladies,"  
 But couldn't (their art hadn't reached such expansion)  
 Supply one to haunt a Baronial Mansion.

But, keenly pursuing his search,  
 One midnight, as twelve was just tolling,  
 Crooks found 'mongst the tombs near a church  
 A real spectre moodily strolling,  
 Whose dignified carriage and absence of jollity  
 Proclaimed him the ghost of a Person of Quality.

His costume, though worn very thin,  
 Suggested Beau Brummelish orgies  
 Of fashion and wine, that came in  
 And died with the last of the Georges.  
 And spying stout Crooks dressed in latter-day style,  
 There passed o'er his visage the ghost of a smile.

Said Crooks, "I surprise you, I fear"  
 (His terror he tried to dissemble).  
 "You must find it chilly, sir, here.  
 My house" (he was all of a tremble)  
 "Is close by: nice place, though I don't want to vaunt it.  
 Now, would you oblige me by coming to haunt it?"

"I've portraits (in oils) there on view,  
 And—sir, you may name your own salary  
 If I can prevail upon you  
 To join them and dwell in the gallery,

## The Ghost's Revenge

153

Unseen, at your ease, and secure from inquisitors,  
Except—say, at Christmas and when there are visitors."

The ghost gave a whimsical croak :

"Egad! you've more cheek than a bantam!

The friend of King George—what a joke!

I'm offered the post of paid phantom!"

His chuckle was grim—"Me, a hired apparition!

'Gad no! but *unpaid*, sir, I'll take the position!"

'Twas Christmas Eve. Crooks, playing host,

With guests round the Yule-log was talking,

When somebody shrieked, "There's a ghost

Upstairs in the gallery walking."

Two persons (young lovers in search of seclusion)

Had seen it and tumbled downstairs in confusion.

"Come!"—Crooks led the way—"follow me!"

They did (with a prayer from the rector),

And there, near the Family Tree,

They saw it—a Georgian spectre.

"Behold!" cried their leader, with pride in his looks,

"The ghost of my grandpa, Sir Christopher Crooks!"

At this, with a terrible glare

Of fury—his eyes looked like daggers—

The ghost shook his fist! Crooks's hair

Grew stiff, and the guests got the staggers.

Then, leaving them rocking like boats in the Channel,

The ghost disappeared through a crack in a panel.

. . . . .

They crept off to bed about two,  
Too frightened for playing or singing.

At three—such a hullabaloo  
Was heard! all the bells started ringing,  
And visitors, servants, and terrified host  
Emerged from their rooms wildly shouting, "The  
Ghost!"

They shot down the stairways pell-mell,  
And—though she was stout and asthmatic—  
The cook, with a horrible yell,  
Came thundering down from the attic,  
Exclaiming, with gasps in hysterical stages,  
"A cab!—fetch—a—cab! I will forfeit my wages!"

And then awful tales were begun  
By voices in frenzied outpouring;  
"He came down my chimney," cried one,  
Cried two, "He rose up through the flooring!"  
"He leered and he gibbered." Their souls were all  
daunted,  
For every soul in that house had been haunted!

But Crooks was the worst of the crowd.  
"It's my fault—I fain would have hid it,  
But can't," he cried, sobbing aloud:  
"I called him my grandpa. THAT DID IT!  
He told me 'twould please him my weasand to sever,  
And swore that he'd haunt me for ever and ever!"

## The Ghost's Revenge

155

The mistletoe hung on the wall,  
But Christmas Day witnessed no kissing,  
For from that Baronial Hall  
The guests and the host were all missing.  
The turkey and pudding were left on the shelf—  
That terrible ghost had the place to himself.

And now the old Hall is to let,  
Rent low—and much lower they'd make it.  
But no one who's looked at it yet  
Has had enough courage to take it.  
'Tis haunted—the tale runs from country to coast ;  
And—oh, he's a regular fiend of a ghost !

### AT SUNSET

I HEARD the lark at Daybreak sing,  
The Morning zephyr kissed my cheek,  
I drank at Noontide from the spring,  
And sunward climbed towards the peak.  
And now above me, on the height,  
I see the Sun's crimson bars,  
And am content, for with the Night  
Shall I not have the stars ?

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